


Thos. Shepherd & Son Funeral Directors

Franklin L. Kelchner

(Died May 7, 2011)

 Franklin L. Kelchner, Sr., 69, of Etowah, died Saturday, May 7, 2011, at the Elizabeth House following a short period of declining health.



He was a native of Altoona, PA, a son of the late Sylvester L. Kelchner & Kathlyn Hileman Perry. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his stepfather, William P. Perry; and one son, Franklin L. Kelchner, Jr.

He retired from the U.S. Navy as a Chief Petty Officer after 21 years of service to his country. While serving, he had resided in a number of areas, including Rota, Spain and San Diego, CA, before moving to Henderson County in 1988. Following his retirement, he graduated from San Diego Mesa College and later, San Diego State University in 1986 with a BA in Applied Arts and Sciences in Industrial Arts. He was employed by SSECO as a woodshop manager for 13 years. He was of the Baptist Faith.

An avid bowler, with his partner, Russ Story, Frank participated in the Four Seasons Regional Senior Games and won in the Super Senior Division, 65-70 age groups, going on to the North Carolina State Senior Games, becoming eligible to participate in the National Senior Games. He loved playing golf till he was no longer able. He was a dedicated friend and volunteered in the community by making wooden toys for Apple Country Woodcrafters as well as many projects for church, family and friends.

Survivors include his wife, Alvena Kelchner; one daughter, Kathy Sue Kelchner Allen, and her husband, Douglas, of Shelby; two stepchildren, Michael Hafke and Cynthia Hafke Miller; five grandchildren, Jenna George, Chris Allen, Lee Allen, Franklin Kelchner, III, and Katelyn Kelchner; three great-grandchildren, Natalie, Kady & Landon; one sister, Florence Matthews; and two cousins, Bill Swartz and Kenny Piper.

A memorial service will be held at 2:00PM on Thursday, May 12, 2011, at Thos. Shepherd's Church Street Chapel with Pastor W.W. (Bill) Carpenter, Jr., Reverend Mike McMillion, and Senior Chief Petty Officer Mike Van Der Schaaf officiating. Military rites will be conducted by the Hubert M. Smith American Legion Post #77, Hedrick-Rhodes VFW Post #5206, Chapter #14 of the DAV, and the NC Honor Guard. The family will receive friends following the service.

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