

Joseph Gerard Joe Zimmerman Commander USN (RET.)



Joseph "Joe" Gerard Zimmerman
Commander USN (RET.)

Mar. 19, 1929-Apr. 20, 2007

Joseph Zimmerman, age 78, died peacefully in his sleep at home on April 20, 2007, in Stanwood, Washington. Joe was born in Pittsburgh, PA, to Gerald and Mary (O'Brien) Zimmerman and grew up in Allison Park, PA, with his brother, Richard; and sister, Mary Lou. He graduated from St. Ursula's Elementary School and Hampton High School. Joe worked at Glenshaw Glass and the Allison Park Post Office. On August 25, 1950, he married Dorothy Elinor Nicholas, of Pittsburgh, PA.

Joe entered the U.S. Navy during the Korean War on November 24, 1951 and retired from the 13th Naval District September 1, 1975. Joe and Dorothy have five children who accompanied Joe on duty stations across the United States, Guam, and Spain. Joe's 24 year navel Career included Silent Service on both Diesel and Nuclear submarines; USS Sea Owl SS405 as an EM2, EM1, the USS Sea Dragon SSN584 as an EM1, WO1 and the USS Cobbler SS344 as a LT. He served on Submarine tenders; USS Fulton AS-11 as Repair Officer and USS Canopus AS-34 as Engineering Officer. Joe earned his silver dolphins on the USS Seal Owl and his gold dolphins on the USS Cobbler. Joe attended and instructed at many technical schools and attended Program Management school and received numerous commendations for his loyalty and faithfulness and allegiance to his shipmates, his command, the service and his nation.

After retiring from the Navy, Joe and Dorothy bought a home in Mukilteo, Washington, where they enjoyed living for 31 years. Joe spent his time restoring MG Midgets and Metropolitan cars, hunting, fishing, gardening, reading, volunteering and listening to "country music" while living in the Puget Sound area. After a stroke, Joe had to learn to slow down and missed hunting and fishing with his buddies, however he continued his gardening and spent many years enhancing the view of the sound with his beautiful gardens. Joe and Dorothy ventured to Mexico and began coordinating family trips to Cabo San Lucas and Mazatlan. Eleven months ago, Joe and Dorothy moved to Merrill Gardens in Stanwood, WA, where Joe was happy to downsize his garden activities and enjoy more time making new friends.

Joe was a loving man who adored his entire family near and far. He held his family close and always made sure his family reunited in Pittsburgh between change of duty stations where the cousins could play and adults could catch up on the latest adventures. Joe was a gentle soul with a generous heart who quietly and selflessly lent a helping hand, to family, friends, neighbors, and community; happily sharing his bounty of home grown fruits and vegetables and his catch of the day of fish or game or his expertise of the natural habitat. Joe's family was able to surprise him with a large family reunion celebration for his 75th Birthday on his last visit to Pittsburgh. Joe leaves behind a legacy of love for family, children, animals, and plants and the simple

pleasures found in life. His loving memory remains alive with the influence of the country music he loved to listen to and shared with those close to him while living and celebrating life.

Joe is survived by his loving wife of 56 years, Dorothy Elinor (Nicholas) Zimmerman; his younger brother, Richard Zimmerman, of Indianola, PA; sister, Mary Lou Kulbacki, of Gibsonia, PA; his children, Barbara (Richard) Prete, of Chattaroy, WA; Terrill (Edward) Major, of Fairfax, VA; Randy (Dave) Furnas, of Mukilteo, WA; Laurel (Brad) Niven, of Camano Island, WA; Joseph "Scott" Zimmerman, of Marysville, WA; and his 11 grandchildren, Michael, Matthew, Thomas, and Nicholas Major, Erin Furnas, Brennen and Riley Cornett, Rachel and Chad Niven, Shanda and Nolan Zimmerman; and four great-grandchildren, Andrew, Anna, Jacob, and Emily Major.

Joe is now resting his oar, having joined fellow shipmates on eternal patrol.

A memorial service will be held for Joe at 5 p.m., Saturday, April 28, 2007, at Camano Chapel.

A Mass and Memorial Service for friends and relatives in the Pittsburgh, PA area will be at St. Victor's Church, Bairdford, PA, on May 9, 2007, at 7:00 p.m.

Commander J.G. Zimmerman requested cremation and release of his ashes at sea.

Joe's family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to either of the following organizations dear to his heart:

US Submarine Veterans Memorial <http://www.ussvcf.org/memfund.htm>, Joseph "Joe" Gerald Zimmerman, Commander USN (Ret.) Memorial Fund. Mail to: USSV CF - Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 3870, Silverdale, WA 98383-3870 or

Disabled American Veterans http://www.dav.org/cst/giving_options.html, Joseph "Joe" Gerald Zimmerman, Commander USN (Ret.) Memorial Fund. Mail to: P.O. Box 14301, Cincinnati, OH 45250-0301 or call 1-877-426-2838 Ext. 3302.

Cards and Condolences may be sent to his wife: Dorothy Zimmerman Merrill Gardens, 7212-265th Street, Stanwood, WA 98292. dzimmerman@wavecable.com

Our Sincerest thanks for your thoughts and Prayers,
Joe's Family

Arrangements under the direction of Gilbertson Funeral Home, Stanwood, WA.

Published in The Herald (Everett) on April 26, 2007