



JACK WHITESELL

January 2, 1921 - July 16, 2014

Jack M. Whitesell, age 93, passed away on July 16, 2014 at the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs Hospice in Prescott, Arizona. He was born January 2, 1921 in Delavan, Illinois to Ora and Pansy Whitesell.

The family moved to southern California in 1936 when Jack was a teenager. He finished high school, enrolled in a junior college and earned a Bachelor degree in Chemical Engineering from USC, holding several jobs all the while.

When WWII broke out, Jack enlisted in the Marine Corps. After boot camp he served as a 1st Lieutenant in the Pacific and saw action on Guam, the Marianas and other Pacific islands.

In 1947 he met and married his wife Verna Ruth (Olson). Jack received his Masters from USC in Chemical Engineering and started working for the Fluor Corporation. In 1957 he left Fluor to work at AeroJet, which was a part of the emerging aerospace industry. When the space program died out in the early 70's the family moved to their favorite vacation spot, Lakeport, Calif and opened a Coast to Coast hardware store.

In 1994 the couple retired and moved to Prescott to be closer to their daughter and her family. They built a home on the new south course of Antelope Hills. The 20 years that followed were filled with happy times with family, old friends and good neighbors.

His beloved wife of 66 years, Verna Ruth Whitesell, passed away in 2013. He is survived by his daughter Janet Minnich, (Ronald) of Prescott and son John Whitesell of Lakeport, Calif. as well as 4 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at the VA Chapel in Prescott, on Friday, Sept. 12 at 10:00 with interment to follow at the National Cemetery at 11:00.

Comments



“ Janet, It was a pleasure to meet you today at the guest book podium and to have a picture taken with you. I wondered how this celebration of life ceremony would go with me attempting to share my short visitation memories of Jack the Marine. I decided to share in this venue. So, as I type imagine my tears on this page. I know when I do my, almost every Sunday afternoon "roaming the floors visitation" that when I return, sooner or later the service person I had listened to and chatted with the week before would no longer be in the Hospice room. I have resigned myself to that fact, but I did not know how emotional it would be to attend a memorial/celebration of life service. Not to worry I am OK now.

Your Dad died the day after I had my elective craniotomy brain surgery, to help my dystonia neurological movement disorder. It is slowly working. I believe I had visited him the Sunday before, but he was sitting, in a wheelchair close to the nurses station, sleeping.

I vividly remember how Jack would look up and say "hi Doc" (I am a retired Chief Hospital Corpsman that served 2 tours with MY Marines, Vietnam, Okinawa and Camp Pendleton, Due to this connection I am also a Lifetime Member of the Marine Corps League.) As I grasped, Jack's hand, for a handshake, he would ALWAYS smile at me and just not release his grip for awhile. The first time I shook his hand my nickname of "the grip" was a bit too much and I quickly backed off.

Although I am the Chaplain, for the Copper State Marine Corps League, I JUST visited as a volunteer. I would pray for him. silently as I approached or left his room. I am just a good listener and learn so much form the veteran's I visit. I am sorry I did not know your Dad earlier. Oh the "war stories he could have told me."

BTW....we "Desert Chiefs" have heard about that Sailor who is dying and is being promoted to Chief. Also I believe there was a "write up" in the "Navy Times magazine." Thanks to the Naval Reserve female officer who "stayed behind" fot the Chief's ceremony. I am STILL involved in the "training and developing" new Naval Reserve Chief's at the Phoenix Naval Operational Support Center every year.

So, my Dad was a Navy Hospital Corpsman. He JOINED in 1921 and retired in 1951. I was born in 1947.

I did not feel comfortable and did not want to intrude in your "light lunch" today. May be someday you, your husband myself and my Ginny (wife of 43 years) could have a cup of coffee at "JB's Restaurant?" (in October 2014 it will be changing names to "Prescott Junction Restaurant.") All the old owners and crew will be there, but with a "new" menu..

IN closing. THANK YOU...THANK YOU...for allowing me the privilege of visiting you Dad while he was in the V.A. hospital. He was truly a great Marine. I almost blurted out with a oorraahhh or Semper fi, but I controlled myself.

Semper fi & Anchors Aweigh

"Doc" Bob Spencer
HM: 777-9844

"Doc" Bob Spencer - September 12, 2014 at 03:48 PM



“ To our dear friend, Jack: You were the dearest of friends, not to mention a hero in our eyes. We valued every moment we spent with you throughout the years. We miss you, and will always miss you...just as we miss Ruth. We are thankful for the memories...they soften the loss.
Lorne & Peg

Lorne & Peggy Harmon - September 09, 2014 at 12:44 AM