



Ernest ("Ernie") Aaron Arnold

October 3, 2020

Ernest ("Ernie") Aaron Arnold was joined with his Heavenly Father on October 3, 2020, shortly after suffering a stroke. Born in Hempstead, NY on October 4, 1932, Ernie was the son of Fred Arnold and his wife Augusta Arnold. He was pre-deceased by his mother, father, older sister Alice Ann (Haab), and his devoted wife of 58 years, Carol Larson Arnold. He is survived by sons Mark Arnold and Eric Arnold, daughter Kristin Arnold, daughters-in-law Karen Arnold and Katherine Arnold, eight grandchildren: Mitchell, Nicholas (Mary Margaret), Trey, Hailey, Lauren, Elise, Briana (Windhausen), Lindsey (Windhausen), one great granddaughter, Megan, sister-in-law Audrey Jean and her husband John Westberg, and brother-in-law George Haab.

Ernie grew up on Long Island, NY and graduated from high school in Oceanside, NY. His youth was spent playing sports (earning 8 varsity letters playing football, basketball and baseball), and spending as much time as he could swimming and body-surfing at nearby Jones Beach. He moved on and attended Dartmouth College. He interrupted his college studies (by his own admission this was at the insistence of a Dean at Dartmouth) and entered the US Army, eventually earning a spot in Officer's Candidate School. He spent 3 years in the Army, including serving as a First Lieutenant and Artillery Unit Commander stationed in Germany. Following his resignation from the Army, Ernie returned to Dartmouth and received his degree as a history major.

Ernie started his corporate career with Scott Paper Company as a salesman, putting to good use his ample conversational skills. A promotion landed him in Billings, Montana. Billings must have seemed like a new world to Ernie, and it was made much more interesting as a result of a blind date with a young high school teacher, Carol Larson, who had moved there from her family's farm in Minnesota. Ernie and Carol hit it off in spectacular fashion and were together through thick-and-thin until Carol's death earlier in 2020.

Ernie moved through a series of new jobs and new towns with his wife Carol and their growing family, spending time in Philadelphia, PA, Morton and Lisle, IL, and eventually settling in Penfield, NY in 1973, where all of Ernie and Carol's children graduated from high school. Over the years, Ernie worked as a sales executive primarily in the grocery industry. During this phase of his life, Ernie enjoyed coaching and watching his kids play sports, doing yard work (a lifelong obsession/pleasure), and playing tennis. While he didn't grow up playing tennis, Ernie grew to love the game and took great pleasure in particular in rifling his effective, left-handed slice serve wide to the ad court and his right-handed opponent's backhand.

In early 1987, on a snowy but somewhat typical Penfield day, right before heading off to work, Ernie kissed Carol goodbye, and told her he was looking forward to celebrating her 50th birthday later that evening. That morning, Ernie was involved in a devastating accident, as his car was hit by a milk delivery truck. Ernie suffered, among other things, a traumatic brain injury (TBI), and spent three months in the ICU, hospital and rehabilitation centers before making it back home. Over the next several years, Ernie, with Carol and his family at his side, put in the hard work to get healthy. While the TBI had impacted some of his cognitive skills, Ernie poured himself into the physical and cognitive rehabilitation to get back to work, which he eventually did.

His accident also generated a newfound love of volunteering. He became a fixture with a number of charities over the years, particularly those focusing on individuals with disabilities. He was named Volunteer of the Year along with a commendation for Spirit of Service by Brain Injury Services in 1998. He also spent many years volunteering at Camp Good Days and Happy Times in the Finger Lakes region of New York, and Camp Rainbow in Virginia. Ernie's early days spent at Jones Beach served him well as he often worked the "waterfront" areas of these camps. It was never completely clear who was having a better time at these camps, Ernie or the campers.

After retiring from the corporate world, Ernie and Carol eventually moved to Northern VA to be near family. Since 1998, Ernie has been an active member of Old Bridge United Methodist Church, where he has enjoyed doing yard work and other odd jobs to help keep the church looking sharp. He has been particularly involved in serving the homeless directly and via food missions where he loved to spread cheer to those needing a little bit of help. Ernie loved talking to people, family, neighbors, friends or strangers, usually about sports or the weather, and loved passing along small acts of kindness, whether picking up trash, or providing someone with a brief card or candy to make them feel appreciated.

Due to the pandemic, a memorial service will be deferred until an appropriate time in 2021. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation of time or money to the charity of your choice in his name.

Tribute Wall



“ Ernest ("Ernie") Aaron Arnold

January 12, 2023 at 12:00 PM



“ I sat near Ernie and Carol at the 8:30AM church service for many years. Every Sunday we sang hymns, passed the Peace of Christ and worshipped together. Ernie also attended my Sunday morning bible study.

I'm going to miss his smile, gregarious good nature, and simply being in his presence. He was always telling us tales of his family and his "doings" around church and town.

My favorite Ernie tale is that he went skydiving in his 70's. I can't remember if he went with one or more grandsons? Anyway, he landed wrong and hobbled around church for a while afterwards. That was Ernie - - - always ready fo a new adventure!!!

I feel privileged to have known both Ernie and Carol. They both "walked the talk" of being Christian and were wise elders that the rest of us loved and admired.

They are truly missed and the world is not quite as nice without them.....

Wendy MacDonald - October 18, 2020 at 01:28 PM

MM

“ I worked with Ernie around the yard at Old Bride UMC. Ernie would take the non self-propelled mower to the far reaches of our grounds and kept them looking great. I always enjoyed working with him. He was a true servant.

Ernie and I had matching two-loafers that we wore to church. His were always spit shined while mine were not. Several years ago he asked my wife to bring my pair to church without me knowing. Ernie took my shoes home and put a shine to them to match his own. My wife snuck them back into my closet so I would be surprised on Sunday. I was!

Joanne and I are honored to have known both Ernie and Carol and we miss them both but we are glad they are together again.

Mike McDaniel - October 12, 2020 at 03:28 PM

JH

“ Ernie and Carol were our River Ridge neighbors. We feel lucky to have been a part of their lives for a short time. A look at their home here will forever keep them in our hearts.
Rest In Peace, Ernie.

Joyce Hilliard - October 11, 2020 at 12:32 PM

MH

“ Ernie, you were were our inspiration to care for our church, members, those of our community in Lake Ridge, and one another. Thank you for your friendship and sincere caring for all of us. We're so glad you and Carol are together again, both healthy and happy! We miss you both, but know our Lord is blessing you.

Mary Alice Hewitt - October 09, 2020 at 02:19 PM

CE

“ Ernie was one of the 10% of members who did 90% of the work at our church. He was unfailingly upbeat and kind. We'll miss him terribly, but he's back with Carol, where he belongs.

Carol Miller

CEJM - October 09, 2020 at 10:28 AM

KD

“ I have very fond memories of my Uncle Ernie, he was always such a kind man! My condolences to the family, I know he will be missed!
Love,
Kathy Dunne

Kathy Dunne - October 08, 2020 at 05:10 PM