

Obituaries

Gennady "Gene" Michael Novichihin

June 9, 1954 — Sept. 7, 2017

Gennady "Gene" Michael Novichihin, 63, passed away on Sept. 7, 2017, due to complications from his long battle with Parkinson's disease. Gene fought hard and gave 110 percent.

Gene was born in Krasnodar, Russia on June 9, 1954, to Michael and Maria Novichihin. Gene spent most of his childhood on the Black Sea, where he spent time swimming, fishing and being a lifeguard. While enrolled at a maritime academy, Gene and several other men aboard the fishing vessel Vishera defected Soviet Russia in 1972. After spending several long, harsh months at a government detention camp in Greece, Gene was granted political asylum.

Faced with the opportunity to go to many different western countries, Gene choose to come to America in search of his American dream. Gene arrived in New York City without a penny to his name and not knowing how to speak English. Shortly after his arrival in New York, Gene found work in a Russian/Ukrainian immigrant community in New Jersey. While in New Jersey, Gene met his future wife of 43 years, Irene Schelest Novichihin. Shortly after the birth of their first daughter, Tania Novichihin Kleinschmit, Gene and Irene decided to leave New Jersey and follow their American dream further. They packed up their van and drove across the United States, eventually ending up in Oregon. Gene and Irene settled in Woodburn, where they made their home for nearly 35 years.

Initially, Gene found work logging, but his true calling was the sea. After mastering English and becoming a United States citizen, Gene made contact with the maritime union in Seattle, Washington, and was shortly thereafter hired by Foss Maritime of Seattle. Gene started as an ordinary seaman on ocean-going tugboats for Foss. His second daughter, Larissa Novichihin McAree, was born around the time Gene was made captain. He was one of the youngest men to make captain at Foss at the time, and he relished the responsibility and demand of this promotion. Gene's life as a captain allowed him the opportunity that not many of us will ever have — the ability to see the world and have a job that one truly loved. Some of his favorite work locations were Panama, Hawaii, Alaska and New Orleans. We've always knew that salt water ran through Gene's veins. Gene retired from Foss Maritime in 2002 after 27 years of service due to his diagnosis of Parkinson's disease. Giving up his life at sea was as devastating for Gene as his diagnosis.

When Gene was able to enjoy time at home, he enjoyed boating, fishing, playing golf, hunting, target shooting, going to the Oregon Coast and spending time with his family. Gene was a child at heart and especially loved taking his daughters, nieces and nephew on adventures exploring the Pacific Northwest. Gene had a widely adventurous soul and fearless spirit.

Gene was preceded in death by his parents, Michael and Maria Novichihin; father-in-law Gregory Schelest, Sr.; and brother-in-law Gregory Schelest, Jr.

Gene is survived by his brother, Alexander; sister Luda Novichihin; wife Irene Schelest Novichihin; daughters Tania (Bill) Kleinschmit and Larissa (Paul) McAree; granddaughter Naomi Kleinschmit; grandsons Jake and Charles McAree; mother-in-law Nina Schelest; brother-in-law Paul Schelest; and his nieces and nephew. Gene also acted as a father figure for many men and women over the years who turned to him for support, guidance, and, at times, tough love.

The family would like to thank Gene's neurologist Dr. Phipps, the staff at Mt. Angel Providence Benedictine Nursing Center, the staff at Silverton Hospital and Woodburn Ambulance, and Gene's many good-hearted caretakers over the years.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the Brian Grant Parkinson's Foundation (briangrant.org) or the National Rifle Association (home.nra.org).

A memorial service was held Sunday, Sept. 10, 2017, at Unger Funeral Chapel, Mt. Angel. May we raise a glass and make a toast: Godspeed to Captain Gene as he sets sail on his final voyage.



Novichihin

Maria Eurilda Ruef

Aug. 22, 1929 — Sept. 11, 2017

Maria Eurilda Ruef, 88, of Mt. Angel was welcomed into the arms of her savior on Sept. 11, 2017, surrounded by her children and grandchildren.

The first of Walter and Eurilda Barrilleaux's seven children, Maria was born in Biloxi, Mississippi, on Aug. 22, 1929. She attended Sacred Heart high school and worked at a local department store after graduating.

Maria was a wonderful storyteller, and she loved to reminisce about growing up on the Mississippi gulf coast. She fondly remembered afternoons sitting on the sea wall with her toes in the sand, chatting with friends as they watched the shrimp boats come in with their catch, and long summer evenings on the front porch playing games, visiting with neighbors or just watching the fireflies. There were dances on the community pier and evenings at the roller skating rink. That is where she first met a handsome young airman from nearby Keesler Air Force Base, Clem Ruef.

Clem, an Oregon farm boy, was also the eldest child from a large Catholic family, and the two found they had much in common. They quickly fell in love and were married on Easter Sunday, April 17, 1949, at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Biloxi. For their honeymoon, the couple traveled to Mt. Angel to meet Clem's family. "I had only been as far as New Orleans before, so the mountains and the scenery were just beautiful," recalled Maria.

Clem was soon sent to Germany to participate in the Berlin Airlift and six months later, Maria followed, arriving on Christmas eve during a gentle snowfall. "It was like a fairy tale," she recalled.

The newlyweds traveled extensively throughout the U.S. and Europe while raising one daughter and five sons. During the couple's second posting in Germany, Maria's sister Barbara, also married to an airman, recalls reunions between the two families: "We were stationed at Chambley, France. I'd put my kids in my little Renault and would drive to Kindsbach to spend time together." Maria's children remember going on camping trips throughout Europe for weeks at a time. "We'd put tents, supplies and our family of eight in a Chevy station wagon and set off to Italy, France, Spain and Holland with a caravan of like-minded military families. We ate a lot of C-rations," they recalled.

Through five different postings in the U.S. and abroad, and with Clem away on missions for months at a time, Maria kept the family afloat in uncertain times. She was a woman of faith, often found by her kids on her knees at the foot of her bed after falling asleep during evening prayers.

After 21 years of that vagabond lifestyle, Clem retired from the Air Force and the family moved to Mt. Angel, where Clem began farming with his brother Max. Maria adapted again — her half-grown brood took to farm life with a passion and Maria settled into farm and small town life as she had into military life — with grace and a lot of hard work.

Maria was happiest serving others, hosting large family gatherings, and friends from their years in the military. Her grandchildren remember her as a fixture in the kitchen, stirring up great pots of seafood or chicken gumbo, red beans and rice, and stacks of fried chicken or fried oysters for oyster po' boys. Her pecan pies graced every Thanksgiving and Christmas table.

Maria was a compassionate listener, a gracious hostess and a gifted storyteller. She is remembered by all for her kindness. She was the matriarch of three generations — mother of six, grandmother of 19 and great-grandmother of 13. She loved and cared for each one with a special devotion.

Maria is survived by six children, Mary (Steve) Lierman, Jim (Gina) Ruef, Mike (Susie) Ruef, Clem (Lan) Ruef, Bob (Carol) Ruef and Don (Gail) Ruef; her brothers, Edward Barrilleaux and Robert Barrilleaux; and her sisters, Rosalyn Ross, Barbara Ford and Eva Arbogast.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 68 years, Clem Ruef; her parents Walter and Eurilda Barrilleaux; and her brother, Walter "Buddy" Barrilleaux.

Rosary and funeral mass were held Sept., 18, 2017, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Mt. Angel.



Ruef

In place of flowers, donations may be made to St. Joseph Shelter in Mt. Angel or to Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma Relief efforts by Catholic Relief Services.

Arrangements are made by Unger Funeral Chapel.

Obituaries

John William Heater

March 16, 1942 — Sept. 9, 2017

John William Heater passed away peacefully Saturday afternoon surrounded by family.

John was born March 16, 1942, in Silverton to Maurice and Lucille Heater. He spent his early years working on the family farm. John attended Victor Point grade school and graduated from Silverton High School in 1960. He married his high school sweetheart, Kit Carson, in 1961, and together they had two children, Jennifer and John. They were together for 10 years. He married his second wife, Kathy Randall, in the early 70s and together they had two children, Megan and Randy.

John is preceded in death by brother Jerry and grandson Travis. He is survived by his wife, Patricia; brother Jim (Shirley); sister-in-law Colleen; children Jennifer (Rolf), John (Julie), Megan and Randy (Kelsey); grandchildren Travis, Joshua, Reed, Jordan, Mason, Logan and Marcus; and great grandchildren Taylor and Jason.

A memorial service was held Sept. 16 at City View Funeral Home and Cemetery in Salem. A private reception followed.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you donate to The Cancer Society of America or American Lung Association in John's name.

Carlene Koch Papenfus

Sept. 8, 1935 — Sept. 4, 2017

Carlene Papenfus, was born in San Bernardino, California, and attended schools in Riverside, California. In 1963, she moved to Monitor, and in 1967, relocated to Silverton to help develop and operate a Bedding Plant business. She moved to Salem in 1977. Carlene managed the Hickory Farms Store in the Salem Plaza from 1979 until 1981. In 1980, she married Frank J. Papenfus.

Survivors include husband, Frank; children James Sherman Foster III (Marla), Julia Ann Oliver and Franklin Kurtis Koch; stepchildren Karen Smith, Grant Koch, Lorraine Papenfus, Michael Papenfus and Terry Papenfus; 10 grandchildren; and 5 great grandchildren.

Contributions may be made to Shriners Children Hospital in Portland in gratitude for son, F. Kurtis Koch.

Services were held Sept. 17 at Virgil T. Golden Funeral Service.

Carley Wayne Brock

Dec. 28, 1934 — Sept. 9, 2017

Carley Brock, 82, passed away peacefully at Marquis Silver Gardens in Silverton.

Carley was born in Ardmore, Oklahoma, to Harve and Minnie (Brantley) Brock, one of eight children. He was raised and graduated high school in Oklahoma, where he then joined the United States Navy. Carley met and later married Hazel "Jo Ann" Stuchlik and to this union had three children. Carley continued to serve in the Navy until his retirement. Carley and Jo Ann made Silverton their home in 1982. Throughout his life, Carley enjoyed hunting, fishing and especially his family.

He is preceded in death by his parents, six siblings and wife, Jo Ann, who passed in 2010.

Carley is survived by his daughter, Sharlla Burton of Abbeville, South Carolina; sons Wayne Brock of Silverton and Michael Brock; granddaughter Ariel Burton; grandson Steven Brock; great-grandson Kellan Porter; and sisters Mary Hart and Donna Branch, both of Eufaula, Oklahoma.

Arrangements by Unger Funeral Chapel.

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