

George Luther Rankins, III

September 2, 2021



George was born in Prestonsburg, Kentucky. The family moved to California when he was 2 years old and he grew up in San Bernardino. George survived polio when he was 10 years old. After the U.S. entered World War II, George enlisted as soon as he turned 18. He wanted to be a navy flier but due to the polio he could not pass the navy physical. He enlisted in the Merchant Marine, the only service that would take him. He went to radio school in Boston, MA and spent the war as the radio operator on a supply vessel in the Pacific. His ship was anchored in Tokyo Bay when the war ended and he watched the surrender ceremony through binoculars.

George is preceded in death by his parents, George L. Rankins and Lena Mills Rankins, and his sister, Jerrie Helen Rankins. He is survived by his wife of 74 years Marian Smith Rankins, children Cynthia Rankins, (Stephen Weil), James Rankins (Kathy Wheeler), and Neil Rankins, granddaughter Morgan Galliano, great-grandson Rowan Galliano, several nieces and nephews and many cousins.

George and Marion met in college on a blind date...except that Marian was with the other fellow! He eventually asked her out and they were married in 1947. After 10 years in San Bernardino, they made the

decision to finish college and moved to Arcata, California, in 1958. Doing this with three young children was a challenge but successfully accomplished. While attending college full time, George also worked jobs such as driving a school bus mornings and afternoons and being a night watchman at a lumber mill. They received education degrees from Humboldt State and got teaching jobs in Crescent City in 1960.

George had many interests, among them amateur radio, baseball, traveling, camping, fishing, spending time at the beach and cooking. He was a master at making omelets and there is a family joke about George's 3 or 4 skillet breakfasts. He loved books and reading and there were weekly trips to the library. The librarians, Mrs. Cadra and Mrs. Wilson, soon waived the 2-book limit for the Rankins family, in self-defense! He loved music and the house was filled with folk, jazz, big band and classical sounds while the kids were growing up. George was very fond of animals. There were 3 beloved dogs and many cats, most of those strays or rescues, over the years. One of his last requests was for another tabby kitten; he named her Toughy after a cat in a favorite book.

At Del Norte High School George taught business classes, including typing, accounting, business law and distributive education. He was in charge of the work experience program and also taught driver training. He could be tough on his students, but they were very important to him, and he went out of his way to help and support them if he could.

A memorial gathering will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers please consider donating to the Del Norte Retired Teachers Scholarship Fund, C/O Del Norte Scholarship Foundation. 301 West Washington Blvd. Crescent City, CA 95531

Arrangements are under the direction of Wier's Mortuary Chapel.