

Walter Gerald Nelson (Jerry)

June 18, 1925 ~ September 24, 2024

Napoleon remarked that "an army marches on its stomach." Without being well-provisioned, an army does nothing. Jerry was a Merchant Marine in WWII, serving on cargo ships that provisioned the Army and the Marines. The Merchant Marines were critical to the success of the Army and the Marines in WWII. The Merchant Marines suffered the highest casualty rate in WWII--higher than the Navy, the Army Air Force, the Marines and the Army itself. The merchant ships crewed by the Merchant Marines had no protection from enemy submarines and were ruthlessly hunted by enemy submarines. Jerry's service included service at Okinawa, the largest land-sea battle in history. Over 140 US ships were sunk or heavily damaged by kamikaze attacks at Okinawa, including one kamikaze attack plane that landed within a few feet of Jerry's ship. He never made much of it--he just called it the greatest fireworks show in history. He was a typical Merchant Marine--proud of his service but never really given full credit for the risks he took and the lives he saved by provisioning the Army and the Marines. The goods Jerry delivered were as critical to success in the War as the Army and the Marines who stormed the beaches in the Pacific. But Jerry never bragged about anything. He was just a smiling fellow who went about his business, put his head own and worked through things with humility and grace. We will miss him, and the world is worse off with his passing.

- Allene Lemons

Dixie Our hearts ■ and thoughts are with you today as you say goodbye to your sweet Jerry. Our boys know him as grandpa Jerry and are wanting to know how " grandma Dixie is and wishing her well" We're sorry we cannot attend as work is in the way today but our thoughts are with you and your family Love jack, barb and the boys

- The kolkman family

Truly one of America’s Greatest Generation. Love to the family.

- Richard and Ellen Folke

Miss you uncle Gerald. See you soon on the other side. Take care of my Sister. Vivien Dee Nelson Stoneburg. Aunt Dixie this is the first we heard. Give us a call some time. Craig and Sandie Nelson 208-284-6777

- Donald Craig and Sandie Nelson

At my sister's service today i heard of Uncle Jerry's passing. I had just thought about him three days ago. He was a lovely man. Smiling and laughing. I loved his Toranado and his adventurous spirit. He was a hard worker and truly earned the wealth he acquired. I have intended missed his smiling face and good humor. I'm sure he will be missed by many people.

- Pamela Nelson Waagen