



LT. Col. Ernest G. Berger, (USAF Ret.) Ph.D

October 4, 1919 - September 20, 2019

Another member of the Greatest Generation has completed his last tour of duty. On Friday, September 20, 2019, Lieutenant Colonel Ernest G. Berger, Jr. passed away just days short of his 100th birthday in Tallahassee, Florida.

Ernest was born on October 4, 1919 in Syracuse, NY to Ernest G. Berger, Sr. and Lucille P. Berger. In 1939, he joined the New York State National Guard and, after peeling potatoes on kitchen patrol, he immediately enrolled in Officer Candidate School, and thus began a renowned career in the U.S. Army Air Corps/U.S. Air Force. During his quarter century with the Air Force, he served in World War II, the Korean conflict, and the Cold War. He was responsible for radar installations on all military bases nationwide, public relations, and external Air Force communications. He finished his military career stationed at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), the headquarters for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

After retiring from the Air Force, he attended Florida State University, earning his bachelor's degree in Industrial Arts Education. He then earned his master's degree in Education from Oswego (NY) University. Ernest returned to Florida State University as a professor and worked with NASA to develop the Space Lab to educate future generations. While teaching at FSU, he earned his Ph.D. in Business Administration at the age of 70, and continued teaching for another 15 years before retiring for a second time at the age of

85.

Ernest also had a passion for investing and formed Selected Equities Associates (SEA), as an investment vehicle to pursue this interest.

As much as Ernest enjoyed his careers, his heart was always with his family. He was married to Bette Lucille Berger (Mathis) for over 50 years. They had four children, eight grandchildren, and six great grandchildren. Ernest loved his family, the USAF, fast Mercedes, fishing, dancing, classical music, garlic martinis, Dog Island, and traveling the world.

Ernest was preceded in death by his wife Bette and his parents Ernest and Lucille. He is survived by his children: Bruce Berger (Shirley), Barbara Bumgarner (Barry), Michael Berger (Teresa), and Tom Berger (Melanie); his grandchildren, Kerry Berger, Tracy Harris, Beth Johnson (Paul), Billy Bumgarner, Becca Bodin (Zach), Shannon Berger, Chelsea Berger, and Olivia Vigliotti; and his great grandchildren Harlan, Holton, Madeline, Charlotte, Emma, and Amelia.

A visitation will be held at Bevis Funeral Home at 200 John Knox Road in Tallahassee on Monday, September 23rd from 6:00-7:30 p.m. with a vigil at 7:30 p.m. The funeral service will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 24th at 10:30 a.m. at the Co-Cathedral of St. Thomas More at 900 W Tennessee Street in Tallahassee. Interment will follow at the Tallahassee National Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the Co-Cathedral of St. Thomas More, 900 W. Tennessee Street, Tallahassee, FL 32304, the Air Force Aid Society, 1550 Crystal Drive, Suite 809, Arlington, VA 22202 or Big Bend Hospice, 1723 Mahan Center Blvd, Tallahassee, FL 32308.

Rocky Bevis of Bevis Funeral Home (850-385-2193 or www.bevisfh.com) is

assisting the Berger family with their arrangements.

Cemetery Details

Tallahassee Memory Gardens

4037 North Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32303

Previous Events

The family will receive friends

SEP **23.** 6:00 PM (ET)

Bevis Funeral Home & Crematory
200 John Knox Rd
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(850) 385-2193

Funeral Mass

SEP **24.** 10:30 AM (ET)

Co-Cathedral of St. Thomas More
900 West Tennessee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32304

Tribute Wall



“ *Serenity Wreath was purchased for the family of LT. Col. Ernest G. Berger, (USAF Ret.) Ph.D.*



September 23, 2019 at 12:02 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of LT. Col. Ernest G. Berger, (USAF Ret.) Ph.D.*



September 22, 2019 at 08:25 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



Bevis Funeral Home - September 21, 2019 at 01:38 PM