



Gary Martin Arnold

May 3, 1948 - December 19, 2024

Gary Martin Arnold, 76, of The Villages Florida, passed into heaven on December 19, 2024. Gary was born to Rollie and Ruth Arnold of Oak Harbor on May 3, 1948. His extended family, the Atwaters, were very close and the cousins spent a lot of time together. Gary enlisted in the Navy from 1968–1972, where he quickly rose to the rank of Second-Class Petty Officer. Not long after, he moved into advertising and spent much of his career at the Yellow Pages. But it was firefighting that always had his heart. He had been a volunteer firefighter since 1974, but then had the opportunity to become a full-time Fire Chief, a lifelong dream, in 1998. He served valiantly as the Fire Chief of Union Township/South Lebanon Fire Department, turning the department around and establishing it as a first-rate firehouse. He loved training up firefighters and running command on scenes. He was a patriot and a public servant.

Gary married the love of his life, Christine Louise Lechlak, on June 15, 1974. This summer they celebrated 50 years together with a family cruise, one of their favorite vacations. Gary was a devoted husband and demonstrated what a husband's love should be. They added a daughter, Stacey, in 1979 and a son, Brian, in 1983, and Gary dedicated his life to providing a stable home. He was a man of integrity and instilled these values in his children. Gary and Chris moved to Florida in 2005 and loved their time in the sun. Gary was an avid softball player and enjoyed golf

when he could. In their early days in The Villages, you could find them at Katie Belle's dancing to country and polka music. Most importantly, Gary was born again the spring of 1983 at 34 years of age. Friends shared the gospel with him, invited him to church, and he gave his life to Jesus Christ. At life's final breath, Gary was taken to heaven, not because of anything he had done, but because of the faith he had in Jesus. He wanted his friends and family to know the same love of God that had been his in Christ.

Gary was preceded in death by his parents, Rollie and Ruth (Atwater) Arnold Fahle, and his nephew James Arnold. He is survived by his wife, Chris Arnold, daughter Stacey (Tony) Moore, Brian (Lauren) Arnold, his brother Gene (Sue) Arnold, and his sister-in-law Dawn Okos; his grandchildren Isabelle and Abigail Moore and Jameson and Natalie Arnold; and nieces Rachael (Jay) Szykowny, Amy (Mark) Kahl, and Angela Arnold, and nephew Joe (Amber) Okos. He deeply loved all his family.

Funeral services will be held at noon on Friday, December 27 at New Life Christian Church (Wildwood) with Dr. Brian Arnold officiating. Visitation will be from 9:00am until the service at 12:00pm.

In lieu of flowers, expressions of condolence can be made to New Life Christian Church

"Blessings by the Spoonful" ministry. Arrangements provided by Roberts of Ocala Funeral Home.

Cemetery Details

Florida National Cemetery

6502 SW 102nd Avenue
Bushnell, FL 33513

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 27. 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

New Life Christian Church
4701 E County Rd 462
Wildwood , FL 34785

Funeral Service

DEC 27. 12:00 PM (ET)

New Life Christian Church
4701 E County Rd 462
Wildwood , FL 34785

Graveside Service with Military Honors

DEC 30. 12:30 PM (ET)

Florida National Cemetery
6502 SW 102nd Avenue
Bushnell, FL 33513

Tribute Wall



“ *Your Light Shines was purchased for the family of Gary Martin Arnold.*



December 27, 2024 at 09:16 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gary Martin Arnold.

December 27, 2024 at 09:16 AM



“ *Thr Orr's purchased the Sentiments of Serenity S pray for the family of Gary Martin Arnold.*



Thr Orr's - December 26, 2024 at 02:38 PM



“ *Thr Orr's planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Martin Arnold.*

Thr Orr's - December 26, 2024 at 02:38 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Gary Martin Arnold.



December 23, 2024 at 03:43 PM



“ Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Gary Martin Arnold.



December 22, 2024 at 04:08 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gary Martin Arnold.

December 22, 2024 at 04:08 PM



“ I am so sorry Gene And Suzanne and family. I am sure as Gene and Suzanne are wonderful people Genes brother was too.my heartfelt sympathy to the family 🙌❤️ Sincerely Deb Ireland

Deborah Ireland - December 21, 2024 at 10:23 AM

DT

“ *Debbi and Tamie purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Gary Martin Arnold.*



Debbi and Tamie - December 21, 2024 at 08:47 AM

DT

“ *Debbi and Tamie planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Martin Arnold.*

Debbi and Tamie - December 21, 2024 at 08:47 AM

DF

“ *Our condolences to Chris and family. Our prayers are with you all during this difficult time. Rest in peace Gary. Den and Deb Fahle*

Den and Deb Fahle - December 20, 2024 at 08:39 PM