



George Ritter

October 10, 1929 - September 27, 2020

George Gardner Ritter

George Gardner Ritter, beloved father, brother, Papaw, Great-Papaw and friend, died on September 27, 2020 at his home in Oak Ridge, TN. at age 90.

George was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania on October 10, 1929. He was appointed to West Point from the 18th Congressional District.

On graduation George went in the Armor Corps. His first assignment was with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment during 1951. He then went to Berlin and served with the 6th Infantry Regiment. In 1954 George resigned his commission and accepted a position in manufacturing management with Procter and Gamble where he worked until 1956.

From 1956 to 1974 he served with Westinghouse Electric Corporation's Bettis Atomic Power Laboratory as Procurement Manager, Program Manager, and Manufacturing Manager on a variety of Naval Nuclear Reactor fuel manufacturing programs. He worked on the Shippingport Project (the first commercial nuclear power reactor) and several submarine reactor core programs. In 1969 he had a key role in the manufacture and delivery of the advanced design replacement reactor cores for the Enterprise aircraft carrier.

From 1974 to 1983 George was at Westinghouse's Advanced Reactor Division, working on the Clinch River Breeder Reactor Plant Program. Assignments included management of the reactor refueling system and head area design, and program management of reactor and plant auxiliary systems design and fabrication.

From 1983 until 1987 he was Vice President and General Manager of the Maxima Corporation's Systems Technology and Support Group headquartered in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Maxima provided systems design, performance analysis, environmental engineering, facilities management, computer systems management, and information processing services.

From 1987 to 1993 George was President, Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer of Performance Development Corporation, an engineering services company providing management consulting to a variety of Federal, commercial and government prime contractor customers.

George retired in 1993 but continued for several years to put in a few hours each week

performing consulting work for Performance Development Corporation and East Tennessee Materials and Energy Corporation. He participated in Oak Ridge and Roane County civic activities and was a member of East Tennessee Economic Council Board of Directors. George worked on the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance for Seniors Program. He served as Secretary of Gene Research Access Corporation (GENRAC), a 501(c)(3) corporation assisting Oak Ridge National Laboratory Biology Division in establishing a public/private partnership. He was Membership Director of the Oak Ridge Amateur Radio Club as well as serving on the advisory board for the Anderson County Drug Court, programming their database. As part of his great love for the outdoors, George served as Treasurer and Director of Smoky Mountains Hiking Club for many years. He coordinated Appalachian Trail Maintainer Committee work activities and served as the Hiking Club representative to ATC's Southern Regional Partnership. More recently he managed the finances for ATC Cullowhee 2013, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's biennial conference.

George is survived by daughter Diane L. Petrilla M.D. (spouse Eric Keller), son George H. Ritter (wife Chris), and son John B. Ritter (wife Lee). He is survived by 7 grandchildren (Joe Petrilla and wife Tara, Ally Petrilla, Addy Petrilla, Nick Ritter, Clare Ritter, Jennifer Ritter and Shannon Ritter) as well as 3 great grandchildren (Sierra, Kaia and Leyna). He is also survived by his long-time companion Betty Glenn, as well as sister Suzanne Chandler (husband Richard) and nieces and nephews.

Our father lived his life with extraordinary determination, a wonderful sense of humor, and great integrity. He was a "force" to all who knew him. His legacy to his family is those qualities, as well as his enduring love of the outdoors and the joyfulness it brings to all our lives. He will be missed beyond measure.

Donations in his honor can be made to the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, PO Box 51592, Knoxville, TN. 37950-1592 or to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, 799 Washington St., Harper's Ferry, WV 25425-0807.

Arrangements entrusted with Martin Oak Ridge Funeral Home.

Comments



“ George, I am so sorry for your loss. I have fond memories of your dad from when we would hang out at your house during high school. He was a fine man. Please accept my condolences. Randy Weir

Randy Weir - October 08 at 11:04 PM



“ Section hiked the AT a few times with George back in the 90s and a memorable canoe trip with George and others in the Okefenokee Swamp. Forever grateful for his support, patience and shared knowledge when I was first starting backpacking, something that continues to bring me peace. Thank you, George.

Robin Penegar - October 02 at 10:46 AM



“ Diane and Family: We are so sorry to hear of your loss. From reading his obituary it is obvious his was a life well lived! Condolences to you all.

Lori and Tony Anderson - October 01 at 04:08 PM



“ George was one of my favorite people. Always enjoyed talking with him on our backpacking trips as he had such a good sense of humor and always made me laugh. Hope you are hiking wonderful hikes George. Always a good friend.

Barbara Allen - September 30 at 08:28 PM



“ Ours was a humble beginning. We met picking up trash on the Obed and found we had something in common – database! We’ve kept each other company for 18 years, canoeing, camping, hiking, biking, golfing, traveling, and playing cards. We journeyed to every state except Hawaii and North Dakota – our last trip was driving down Oregon’s Pacific Coast. I swear that we knew each other so well, we could read each other’s minds. We merged our families -- countless soccer games, tennis matches, basketball games, school plays, regattas, and school debates. We attended several weddings, graduations, and funerals. Through George, I met wonderful people that I love so much. I shared a few photos for the first 3 years and stopped – it was getting to be too hard. Maybe I will share more later. For now, those of us who were lucky enough to have been a part of George’s life will miss him so much and we will never forget him.
-- Betty

Betty J Glenn - September 30 at 12:11 PM



“ 15 files added to the album Memories Album



Betty J Glenn - September 30 at 11:56 AM



“ As a minor employer he still took an interest in me as he did everyone, no matter where on the totem pole they resided. We hiked a few times, but I don’t think I ever got him into cave.

Roger Johnson - September 29 at 09:55 PM



“ I extend my sincere sympathy to George's family.
George possessed a gritty determination to do every job to the best of his ability and to lead others by his example. He understood how to be a good friend. I was privileged to be one of those friends. Thank-you, George!

Philip Royer - September 29 at 04:22 PM



“ George was a great friend of the Appalachian Trail and kind and light hearted in our shared work. His simple compliments always felt significant and heartfelt. I'll miss you George!

Andrew Downs - September 29 at 03:13 PM