



## Albert Paul Bederka

August 16, 1930 - September 5, 2019

Albert Paul Bederka, 89, of Madison Heights, Michigan, passed away peacefully in his sleep on Thursday, September 5, 2019. He was born in 1930, in Binghamton, NY as the oldest child to Julia (ne Vock) and Paul Anthony Bederka. His family moved to Detroit in 1941, when he was 11 years old. He grew up in Southwest Detroit, eating Coney dogs at Duly's (where they called him Sunny), and playing in Clark Park. He graduated from Holy Redeemer High School in 1948.

As a young man, Albert was prone to near death experiences, which included falling through ice, and going through the windshield of a car. He joined the Marines reserves in high school, went on active duty in 1950, then shipped out to Korea as part of the 1st Battalion 7th Marine Division. He attained the rank of Staff Sergeant. Just days short of fulfilling his service obligations, he stepped on a land mine and nearly lost his legs and life. He spent almost a year in hospitals, had numerous surgeries, but defied the odds to not only walk, but return to a near normal use of his legs, though never quite pain free. The shrapnel remaining in his legs regularly set off alarms for metal detectors at the airport for most of his life.

When he returned home, Albert married the love of his life, Mary Ruth Scanlon in 1955. He shared 64 loving years with his beautiful wife, who he continued to call "his bride" up until the day he died. Together they raised six

children, and were blessed beyond with eleven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Throughout their years together, they shared many hobbies, travels and adventures. They especially enjoyed their camping travels throughout the U.S. in their popup Coleman camper, many trips to their timeshare in Las Vegas, travels to Washington D.C. and Boston, plus several European adventures. Their two years living in England and traveling throughout Europe, was a special highlight. They loved food and wine, and very much enjoyed cooking gourmet meals together at home.

They shared a deep Catholic faith, attended church weekly regardless of where they were, and sent all six of their children through parochial school. He was well known to live his faith and show it through his many selfless acts, often helping strangers stranded on the road, or family and friends in need of an ear, advice or other support.

Individually, Albert loved fishing, hunting, and was an excellent marksman. He fished regularly with friends and family in Canada, up until this last year. He had planned to attend again this fall. He enjoyed poker, euchre and endless games of dominoes with his family. Albert took meticulous care of his possessions and equipment, and would pass the time repairing and stringing fishing reels and lines, organizing and labeling equipment and tools, and his prized wine cellar. He enjoyed reading and exploring history, particularly military history. He was a longstanding member of the Elks Club.

As a professional man, Albert led a charmed career. He had always enjoyed drawing as a young man, and through the GI Bill was able to earn an Associate Degree in drafting. He was hired into General Motors and worked on numerous projects as a draftsman and then design manager, including years with the Corvette program. He taught at Henry Ford Community College and enjoyed inspiring another generation of designers and draftsmen. His ability to organize took him outside of his design and drafting management

roles to lead efforts at the beginning of the computer age, beginning CAD programs and creating organizational manuals for technology. He retired on his own terms after 30 years, and was recruited to work on the ground level of the Chrysler Viper program. To the chagrin of his children, he never owned a Corvette or a Viper, saying he preferred to work on them than own one. He was very proud of the fact that he was retired for more years than he had worked professionally. He was very good at retirement.

He is survived by his loving wife, Mary Ruth, sons Robert (Penny) and John Bederka, daughters Cheryl (David) Zablocki and Nancy (Troy) Coopriider, daughter-in-law Lori (ne Tirpik) Bederka, and his younger brother Robert (Judy) Bederka. He was proud of his many grandchildren, Elizabeth Bederka, Patrick (Deanna) Bederka, Connie (Ryan) Alder, Daniel (Kelsey) Bederka, Michelle (Josh) Pickel, Danielle Gammon, Katie Bederka, Jessica and Nathan Zablocki, and Brogan and Mason Coopriider. He was blessed in recent years with wonderful great-grandchildren Raiden Bederka, Katie and Luke Alder, Harper Winnie, Clara Winnie, Alice Winnie, Dylan and William Pickel. He will miss teaching them all how to fish, and play dominoes. He was sadly pre-deceased by two siblings, Paul Jerome Bederka and Jeannine Barden, and his two eldest sons, Christopher and James Bederka. May he rest in peace, guarding the streets of heaven with his Marine Corps brethren. Amen.

Flowers or donations are welcome. Albert was especially fond of the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans. Donations are used to provide veterans with special activities, entertainment and outings. The funds also help purchase dentures, eyeglasses, hearing aids and other necessities for veterans who cannot afford these items:

<https://media.state.mi.us/MichiganeStore/public/ProductDetails.aspx?categoryID=7&productID=271>

Visitation will take place Friday, September 13, 2 - 8 p.m. (Scripture Service 7:00 p.m.) at Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Home, 705 W. 11 Mile Rd., Royal Oak (4 blocks E. of Woodward). Funeral Mass will be held Saturday, September 14, 10:00 a.m. (9:30 a.m. in-state) at Guardian Angels Catholic Church, 581 E. 14 Mile Rd., Clawson. Interment with military honors will take place at Great Lakes National Cemetery.

Please share a memory on the Tribute Wall (see tab above).

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP **13.** 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak  
705 W. Eleven Mile Road  
Royal Oak, MI 48067  
(248) 541-7000  
royal@sullivanfh.com  
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

## Funeral Mass

SEP **14.** 10:00 AM (ET)

Guardian Angels Catholic Church  
581 E. 14 Mile Road  
Clawson, MI 48017

## Burial

SEP **16.** 10:30 AM (ET)

Great Lakes National Cemetery  
4200 Belford Road  
Holly Township, MI 48442

# Tribute Wall

CB

“ I've known Al for many years being a neighbor on Whittier and worked at GM.  
Played golf and bowled with Al on the GM leagues.  
I pray that God gives the Bederka family strength and healing from your loss.  
Barb and Bill Ballard  
11096 Rambling Way  
Stanwood, Mi. 49346

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**C William Ballard** - September 13, 2019 at 03:55 PM

BA

“ Bederka family:  
Arlene, Craig, Trish, Brooke & Madison purchased  
the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Albert  
Paul Bederka.



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**Bederka family: Arlene, Craig, Trish, Brooke & Madison** -  
September 12, 2019 at 06:14 PM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of  
Albert Paul Bederka.



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September 12, 2019 at 09:25 AM



“ *With Distinction* was purchased for the family of *Albert Paul Bederka*.



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September 11, 2019 at 08:43 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket* was purchased for the family of *Albert Paul Bederka*.



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September 10, 2019 at 09:52 AM