

The Marine's Prayer

Almighty Father, whose command is over all and whose love never fails, make me aware of Thy presence and obedient to Thy will. Keep me true to my best self, guarding me against dishonesty in purpose and deed and helping me to live so that I can face my fellow Marines, my loved ones, and Thee without shame or fear. Protect my family.

Give me the will to do the work of a Marine and to accept my share of responsibilities with vigor and enthusiasm. Grant me the courage to be proficient in my daily performance. Keep me loyal and faithful to my superiors and to the duties my Country and the Marine Corps have entrusted to me. Help me to wear my uniform with dignity, and let it remind me daily of the traditions which I must uphold.

If I am inclined to doubt, steady my faith; if I am tempted, make me strong to resist; if I should miss the mark, give me courage to try again.

Guide me with the light of truth and grant me wisdom by which I may understand the answer to my prayer.



***Honored Soldier, Beloved Husband,
Father, and Friend to the End...***

Celebrating the Life of USMC Capt. J. Val Smith



April 5, 1929 – November 28, 2015

Honoring and Celebrating the Life of: **J. Val Smith**

J. Val Smith was born on April 5, 1929, in Evansville, IN, to Cleona Quigley Smith and Elwood Valentine Smith. Val graduated from Admiral Farragut Academy in Pine Beach, NJ, in 1942, and joined the Marines in 1946 and trained at Parris Island, SC. In 1952, he graduated from the US Naval Academy. He chose the USMC again to complete his service.

Val began his Officer's Training at Quantico, VA, and completed it at Camp Pendleton, CA, before his deployment as a commissioned officer to Korea. He fought as a Marine Infantry Platoon Leader there and received a Bronze Star, a Purple Heart along with several unit decorations before retiring from the Marines at the rank of Captain in 1956. On his return to civilian life, Val graduated with a MBA from the University of Pittsburgh.

Val is survived by his wife of 17 years, Sylvia Brooks-Smith; his sister, Patricia Sales, of Alamogordo, NM, and his favorite niece, Susan Duran, of Albuquerque, NM. His two daughters, Holly Berkley, of Healdsburg, CA, and Heather Mendelsohn, of New York City, NY. Son, Adam Smith, of Park City, UT. Four grandchildren: Ivy Mendelsohn, Cole Mendelsohn, Connie Smith, and Joe Smith. Stepsons, Fred and Stephen Brooks; and stepdaughters, Kelly Brooks and Susan Herrbold.

Val's heart and soul was serving his country and lending a helping hand, whenever and wherever he could. He considered all of his business clients to be personal friends. As Will Rogers once mused, "I never met a man that I didn't like." Val embodied that sentiment throughout his life and did all he could to help anyone along the way. If he saw a need, he did something about it.

Val was a lifelong athlete and competed in hundreds of Senior Games, since its inception in 1987. A spirited competitor, "Bringing home the gold" was his aim; and he accomplished this numerous times at the local, state, regional, national and master's levels. In fact, he did this so well, that he was recognized by his peers and joined his wife, Sylvia, in induction to the Texas Senior Athlete's Hall of Fame. At the international events, he won three silvers in Track and Field. He organized basketball games, coached others and volunteered in the conduct of the games. For Val, helping a fellow athlete was more important to him than winning.

One of Val's other passions was education. Teaching the young and ensuring that they got off to a good start in life was important to Val. He donated hundreds of books, on values and ethics to the young and old. Val was an avid reader, and wrote many book reviews for Amazon.com.

As the late USMC Korean War veteran and lecturer, Donald Loraine, surmised in his memoirs: **"Val was an excellent officer. He was a Naval Academy graduate whose only fault was trying to do too much."**

Val left for his eternal home on November 28, 2015. He ran the good race.

