



LtCol Robert Lewis Zuern, USMC (Ret.)

October 26, 1924 - February 22, 2019

Lt. Colonel Robert Lewis Zuern USMC Ret. passed away peacefully at the Willson Hospice House in Albany, Georgia on Friday, February 22, 2019. He was born in Beckley West Virginia on October 26, 1924. He grew up in Mayville, Wisconsin. He was preceded in death by his wife, Helen Tackett Zuern, his parents, Lillie Johnson and Elmer Zuern; sisters, Vivian Dapp and her husband Jerome, Virginia Hackbarth and her husband Hacky; brother, David Zuern; sister-in-law Opal Tackett; and brother-in-laws Harold Tackett and Robert Armour.

He is survived by his son, Fallis Zuern, daughter Debra Kornegay and husband Dan, and son Glenn Zuern and his wife, Debbie, granddaughters Anna Lynn Gabarri Zuern and husband Manuel, Lydia Jean Zuern, and Sarah Nell Zuern; his sister, Rose Marie Armour; sister-in-law Rosie LaPoint; nieces Mary Harper, Margaret Schiessl, Joy Saunders; and nephew Jon Dapp; along with many great nieces and nephews.

He excelled in academics. His Catholic priest encouraged the students to "Study for Keeps." Robert later shared those words of wisdom with his three children and then his grandchildren. He was an accomplished athlete and played on the football, basketball, hockey, and baseball teams. He was an avid baseball fan throughout his life. He once sat with Ted Williams at a Senators game in Washington DC. He learned his love of gardening from his mother. His other interests were scouting, hunting, fishing, and trapping which earned him the nickname, Trapper Dan.

He enlisted in the Marine Corps immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbor and fought in major battles on Guadalcanal and Bougainville. While on Bougainville he contracted malaria and was sent to the Navy hospital in San Diego for treatment and recovery. When he returned to Mayville on medical leave, his sister Rose Marie, saw him on her way home from school. The family recounts how she dropped her books and ran to him as he was walking down the street with his duffle bag. After the war he shipped out to China for two years. He was one of the last surviving North China Marines. Home for just a short while,

he shipped out for the Korean War, leaving a note under Helen's pillow, "Gone to Korea". He was one of the Frozen Chosen in Korea. He led a marine rifle force when he landed in Lebanon in 1958. He led a marine detachment that went ashore in the Dominican Republic. He was the operations officer for Regimental Landing Team 26, that went ashore in Vietnam. He returned to Vietnam in 1971 as a member of MACSOG, where he earned the nick name, Bad Bob. He lived and died a combat Marine.

His family accompanied him to Morocco and to his duty stations in Virginia, North Carolina, California, Hawaii, and Georgia. He and Helen retired to Albany Georgia where they became avid Dougherty High School Boosters. He worked with Chuck Roberts and other boosters to support the DHS teams, long after his son had graduated. When asked why he stated, "Someone had done it for my sons the fifteen years I was gone overseas." After his son left, many of his boys continued to come and spend time with him, Dean, Roy, Ray, Pig, Tonto and perhaps his favorite, Randolph "Bear" Drake, and a host of others. His wife and the Col. loved visits from Donna and Cory. They also loved spending time with Larry Daniel who was like a son to Robert. During this time he and his wife developed a close relationship with Ann and Rex Lynch as they loved to discuss sports and play bingo. He loved to garden and raised vegetables, berries and fruits from the trees he planted. He also assisted his wife with her rose bushes. The birds and squirrels ate at the feeders he filled daily, often with the help of his granddaughter Lydia who delighted in helping her PAW work in his back yard.

He enjoyed giving back by working on the Stadium Commission. It was during this time that he formed a lasting admiration and bond with Bob Fowler; and once remarked, "One of the truly great citizens he had ever met in life." When asked to run against John Howard for the city commission in east Albany, he replied "Why," and has supported and campaigned for John Howard ever since.

His life changed and became forever enriched with the arrival of his three granddaughters, Lydia, Anna, and Sarah. He was proud of everything they have accomplished and his last moment was spent smiling at their memory. They were his life the last twenty years, and he loved every second with them. Robert spoke seven languages, Chinese, Vietnamese, German, Arabic, French, Spanish, and English, and was thrilled that his granddaughter, Anna, also loved foreign cultures and languages as he did. He always marveled at the keen observation skills of his beloved Sarah. She amazed him with her abilities all the time. He and his beloved Helen spent many a weekend with their grandchildren enjoying Marks Melon Patch every fall. Late in life Robert still looked forward to visiting Mark and his pet pig ACE.

He was many things but first and foremost he was always a marine. When asked if he had become burned out or tired of the Corps before he retired, he replied, "I was just as excited and motivated to put on my uniform as a marine on that last day as I was the first." *Simper Fi!* Robert Zuern, remarkable Marine, beloved husband, father, and grandfather served his country with honor and loved his family deeply.

The family would like to thank Lucy Seay, Minnie Jackson, Linda Whitlock, and Elaine Hicks for the loving care they gave Robert in his home. The family also wants to express their appreciation and gratitude to the dedicated staff at Willson Hospice House.

Graveside Military Honors will be held at Andersonville National Cemetery on Friday, March 8 2019 at 12 Noon.

Memorials may be made to: Fleet Reserve Association, 125 N. West St., Alexandria, VA 22314, or The National Museum of the Marine Corps, marineheritage.org.

Cemetery

Andersonville National Cemetery

496 Cemetery Rd
Andersonville, GA, 31711

Events

MAR 8 **Graveside Service** 12:00PM

Andersonville National Cemetery
496 Cemetery Rd, Andersonville, GA, US,
31711

Comments



“ Glenn, I wish I had known him. I know that I would have liked him. He passed those traits of service, loyalty, and civic responsibility to his children. I am sorry for your loss, and our community's loss.

Tommy Langstaff

tommy langstaff - March 08 at 02:18 PM



“ LtCol Zuern thank you for your service and for your wonderful family. Praying for Glenn, Debbie and the whole Zuern family.

Roger Marietta - March 04 at 07:03 AM



“ <https://s3.amazonaws.com/storage.lifetributes.com/Candles/new/candle-1.png>
It was an honor and privilege to have know Robert Zuern and his wife Helen. They worked with the Dougherty High School Booster Club during the time our son, Michael Reid played football at Dougherty High School. He continued to follow Michael in college. We are sadden by the passing of Lt. Colonel Robert Lewis Zuern. Prayers and comfort to Glenn and the entire family.

Herman and Rebecca Reid



Rebecca Reid - March 01 at 10:24 PM



“ Uncle Robert will be forever in my heart. There could be no better example than he was of a loving, caring family man and patriotic American. I was fortunate enough when I was young to visit with him and the family when he was stationed in Quantico. He took his mother, my grandma, and me on a tour of all of the important sites in Washington. We also went to Arlington Cemetery, Mount Vernon and Monticello. I even received a tour of the base and went down inside of a tank. He told me many years later that he had just received his pay on that day and that his wallet must have fallen out of his pocket when we went into the tank. Of course, because we were on a Marine base, whoever found it returned it with all of the money still in it! My

thoughts and prayers are with Fallis, Debra and Dan, Glenn and Debbie and his wonderful granddaughters. He had good reason to be very proud of all of you. We can all be sure that he is looking down on us along with the rest of our family up in heaven. Love all of you. I am there with you in spirit. Mary

Mary Harper - March 01 at 09:46 AM



“ Thinking on Glenn, Lydia, Anna and the rest of the Zuern Family during this time of mourning. I remember Mr. Zuern as an upright, respectable, and conscientious man. His kind spirit showed many of the children of Dougherty School System that he cared as a parent and a member of his community. What the world needs now is more people like Mr. Zuern!

Eartha Watkins - February 28 at 05:53 PM



“ Roy & Becky Dale purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of LtCol Robert Lewis Zuern, USMC (Ret.).



Roy & Becky Dale - February 27 at 10:38 PM



“ A great man who I have great respect for. i remember we use to gather on New years day and watch all the football games at the Zuren's . I think were were talking about drinking and i mistakenly said "I drink Scotch all the time" well Mr. Z jump up and said i have some would you like some. I said sure . it was the first time i every had Scotch man it was awful. Mr. Z knew how to call a bluff and all the gang laughed at me for taking 1 sip ans spitting it out . I miss you and all our gatherings

Roy Dale jr. - February 27 at 10:34 PM



“ Mr. Zuern told my parents many years ago, that he never bought a new car! Get one that's a program car or a couple of years old! I believe he worked at the Credit Union when he told my parents that!! His son Glen is a 76 classmate of mine from Dougherty High! So sorry for your loss. Prayers for comfort for the family

Lesley Skandamis Williams - February 24 at 01:04 PM



“ Condolences to the family. Semper Fi

Gerry Whearry - February 24 at 04:37 PM