



## Dr. Zachary Taylor Pate

July 27, 1936 - September 4, 2022

Dr. Zack T. Pate, PhD  
CAPT USN (Ret)

Dr. Zack T. Pate, 86, passed away of heart failure on September 4th, 2022. He was a graduate of Leesburg High School of Leesburg, Georgia, the United States Naval Academy (Class of 1958), and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (PhD, '70). He was recognized for a lifetime of outstanding and continuing meritorious service in support of the Navy, the submarine force, and the nuclear power industry.

Dr. Pate served the Navy with great distinction for over 22 years of commissioned service. Subsequently, he served for over four decades in an influential leadership role as a champion for industrial nuclear power plant safety. He made contributions of extraordinary value to the nation and the entire world.

His life story is one of pursuing excellence and boldly assuming the highest responsibilities of command and citizenship, initially in his Navy career and then in leading two major civilian organizations. He shaped them into positions of impact in the global nuclear energy industry.

He commanded USS SUNFISH (SSN 649), earned his Doctorate in Nuclear

Engineering from MIT. CAPT Pate was early selected for Navy Captain and was personally chosen by the Chief of Naval Operations to be the Prospective Commanding Officer of the USS OHIO (SSBN 726), the first new class of ballistic missile submarines. When the construction of the OHIO was delayed, CAPT Pate was selected by Admiral Hyman Rickover to serve on the Naval Reactors team.

In the wake of the Three Mile Island Incident in 1979, the commercial nuclear power industry established the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO). It's mission is to promote the highest levels of safety and reliability in the operation of commercial nuclear power electricity generating plants. With Admiral Rickover's support, Dr. Pate retired from active Navy service in 1980 to join INPO as Chief of Staff for INPO's CEO, Vice Admiral Dennis Wilkinson, USN (Ret.) With a PhD from MIT (and a thesis written on nuclear safety, his personal passion), he possessed the gravitas and drive to establish standards of excellence for an entire private sector industry. Dr. Pate took the helm at INPO in 1984 where his vision, energy, and selfless efforts led to the U.S. being recognized as the gold standard for nuclear plant safety and reliability. After the Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986, he repeated that success in playing a key role in the founding of the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO).

Dr. Pate retired from INPO in 1998. He had led the commercial U.S. nuclear power industry from being an international laggard to a world leader. He received multiple awards in the industry and was elected a member of the prestigious National Academy of Engineering for "promoting and achieving significant improvements in the safe and reliable operation of nuclear power plants worldwide." He also received the William S. Lee Award for Industry Leadership and the Henry DeWolf Smyth Nuclear Statesman Award. Following his retirement from INPO and during his chairmanship of WANO, he served on many industry associations and boards.

Dr. Pate was an avid sportsman, outdoorsman, and pilot. He savored time with friends hunting game around the world and at his shooting club, Burge. A precise marksman, gardener and conservationist, Dr. Pate relished his time in God's creation.

Dr. Pate was the son of Zack and Maxine Kearse Pate of Leesburg, Georgia. His sister, Clairese Brannen, predeceased him. Dr. Pate is survived by a nephew, Sam Brannen, and a niece, Laura Brannen. Dr. Pate was deeply devoted to his wife, Bettye B. Pate, to whom he was married 63 years, residing in Atlanta for over 40 years.

In lieu of flowers, Dr. Pate's family asks that gifts in his memory be given to the organization that meant the most to him:

World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO)

Mail to:

Institute Nuclear Power Operations

700 Galleria Parkway SE

Atlanta, GA 30339

ATTN: Kris Straw

There will be a graveside service this Saturday, September 10, 2022, at 2 PM in Albany, Georgia. The family will receive friends Saturday, September 10th, 2022, from 01:00 PM to 01:45 PM at Kimbrell-Stern Funeral Directors. The Kimbrell-Stern Funeral Directors is handling arrangements. A celebration of life will be held at the Church of the Apostles, 3585 Northside Parkway, Atlanta, Georgia, on Tuesday, September 20, 2022, at 11:00 am.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP 10. 1:00 PM - 1:45 PM (ET)

Kimbrell-Stern Funeral Directors  
1503 Dawson Rd.  
Albany, GA 31707

## Graveside Service

SEP 10. 2:00 PM (ET)

Crown Hill Cemetery  
1907 Dawson Rd  
Albany, GA 31707  
(229) 883-6600

# Tribute Wall

TM

“ I served at INPO during the time when Zack Pate was CEO. His Christian faith was the thing that impressed me the most about Zack. During our corporate Christmas party, Zack would read to us the Christmas story from his own personal Bible. He attended Mount Paran Church of God in Atlanta at the same time we did. Zack was not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and I was proud to serve under Zack.

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**Terry Moore** - April 16 at 10:46 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. Zachary Taylor Pate.



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September 15, 2022 at 06:33 PM

RC

“ I offer my sincere sympathy to the family of Dr. Zachary T. Pate. He represented the best of Lee County, Leesburg and Lee County High School.  
His achievements cannot easily be matched.  
Robert A. (Bobby) Clay

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**Robert Clay** - September 09, 2022 at 02:29 PM

CC

“ *Claire Chris Courtney Dave Oliver Callie purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Dr. Zachary Taylor Pate.*



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**Claire Chris Courtney Dave Oliver Callie** - September 08, 2022 at 08:28 PM

BT

“ *I'm the brother in law of Doug Lewis and shot sporting clays with Zack a few times. Great man, I enjoyed knowing him. Prayers and condolences, Bob Trogdon*

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**Bob Trogdon** - September 07, 2022 at 08:35 PM

DS

“ *Zack was a wonderful and caring person. He will be missed by so many people. I had the honor to work with him for many years. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Pate family. Debbie Sims and family*

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**Debra Ann Sims** - September 07, 2022 at 03:54 PM