

BENEDICT JOHN GESSLER



Benedict John Gessler, formerly of Hampton Township, died Friday, July 19, 2024 at the ever-young-at-heart age of 98. Ben was the youngest of four children born to Hungarian immigrants, Emerick and Katherine Merl Gessler in Youngstown Ohio on April 3, 1926. All of his siblings (Emerick Gessler, Dorothy Gessler, and Wilma Gorman) preceded him in death. Ben was also preceded in death

by his cherished wife of 62 years Margaret (Peggy Downes) and his beloved children Maureen, Kevin and Mary Katherine. Left to grieve his loss are his children, James C (Jennifer) Gessler of Richmond VA, Benedict J (Barbara) Gessler Jr. of Jacksonville FL, Mary Patricia (James) Nowalk of Whitehall, and Sheila (Robert) Omecene of Hampton, 13 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren, 3 great-great-grandchildren, and his wife, Barbara Groden Gessler. Ben enjoyed the admiration and love of countless friends, business associates, nieces, nephews and fellow travelers along life's journey.

Ben was a WW II naval veteran who attended the University of Notre Dame ('49) through the V12 program (enlisting at age 17), where he majored in sociology and quickly proved himself to be officer material. Post graduation, he found work in sales where his sense of humor, quick wit, and facility with words served him well. He won numerous sales awards with Dictaphone, moved to management level with 3M Thermofax, and ultimately began his own publishing firm, National Conventioneer, with his long-time business partner. His company employed a team of workers at Goodwill Industries for several decades as evidence of his commitment to workers with disabilities. After 33 years, Ben retired and with his wife, Peggy, travelled extensively in Europe and the U.S., supported and patronized a vast array of performing arts in Pittsburgh. He was a loyal Notre Dame and Pittsburgh sports fan, and never turned down an opportunity to whoop you in mini golf or any board game. Ben was a long-time, active member of St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Glenshaw, volunteered for hospice, and served on the Board of Directors of Michael's Place.

Education was of paramount importance to both Ben and Peggy, who ensured that their children and grandchildren had their choice of university for their undergraduate degrees, and encouraged and celebrated their pursuit of post graduate studies. Ben offered logical analysis, keen insight and sage advice when asked but never interfered. Always a people-person, he will be remembered for his broad-minded approach to people, his generosity, ready smile, gregarious nature and kindness.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you share an ice cream with someone you love, in his honor. Memorial donations may be made to Catholic Relief Services, 228 W. Lexington St. Baltimore MD 21201, <https://support.crs.org> or the Pell Project/c/o Connor Nowalk, 4058 Warwick Blvd, #8, Kansas City MO 64111.

Visitation Sunday July 28th from 2-8 PM at **NEELY FUNERAL HOME**, 2208 Mt. Royal Blvd., Glenshaw. Mass of Christian Burial Monday the 29th at 10:30 AM at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, St. Mary of the Assumption Church.

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