

## **FRANCIS "FRANK" JOSEPH BALASH**

Born July 4, 1927, in Natrona Heights, Pennsylvania, to Frank and Anna Balash and died peacefully in his sleep, on January 29, 2025, in Katy, Texas. He was the eldest of five children; predeceased by Patty, Richard and Betty Ann; and survived by John. Frank's 97 years of life spanned a multitude of adventures with both people and places.

Frank enlisted in the U.S. Navy immediately after high school and served honorably from 1945 to 1949. He met Ruth Dolores Kittell during a USO dance in 1948, married her June 18, 1949 and maintained a strong and fruitful marriage for 53 years until her death on July 9, 2002. Using the GI Bill, he earned his bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the University of Wisconsin in 1953 and worked nearly 40 years as a licensed electrical engineer for various companies, including Bell Laboratories, Avco and Textron. He and Ruth were blessed with eight children: Paul Edward (d. 2015) and his wife, Patricia Balash, Ruth Louise and her first husband, Stephen Bruning (d. 1988) and her second husband, Dewey Wayne Jacks, Mary Frances and her husband, John Siracusa (d. 2005), Stephen Francis and his wife, Lois (d. 2018), Ann Marie, Joan Marie and her wife, Lisa Sands, Peter Charles and his wife, Beth Anne Jackson, Michael Francis and his wife, Sheila. Their family includes 16 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Frank worked hard for his family, traveling the world for projects and always sharing his pictures of these places (and clouds) with a slide show once he was back home.

Frank was a man of great curiosity, always learning new and different things, including teaching himself to read and speak Arabic and Spanish. He was a man of mechanical skill, there wasn't a machine he could not fix. He was also a man of steady faith, participating in the choir at Epiphany of the Lord in Katy, serving as a lector and directing fundraising for the church. After Ruth's death, he returned to his roots in Natrona Heights, becoming engaged to Gladys Sorenson, who predeceased him in 2020. Since that time, Frank enjoyed his days in Katy by watching old westerns, enjoying an occasional cigar and floating in his swimming pool.

Visitation for Mr. Balash will be held Sunday, February 16, at the **SCHMIDT FUNERAL HOME**, 1344 W Grand Pkwy S, Katy, TX 77494, from 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. A Funeral service will be held on Monday, February 17, at the **SCHMIDT FUNERAL HOME CHAPEL**, at 8:00 a.m., to be followed by a military honor service, at 10:00 a.m., at the Houston National Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the American Cancer Society, Blue Star Hospice or to the charitable organization of your choice. Schmidt Funeral Home 1344 W Grand Pkwy S, Katy TX 77494 (281) 391-2424.

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