



Gerald Smiley Johnston

January 28, 1943 - June 18, 2026

Gerald Smiley Johnston, born January 28, 1943, raised in Falls Church, Virginia, and resident of New Port Richey, Florida, passed away on June 18, 2026 surrounded by the love of his family. A proud combat veteran of the Vietnam War, Jerry (as he was known) served his country with distinction as a Paratrooper, Jumpmaster, Combat Helicopter Pilot, and member of the 281st Assault Helicopter Company. The courage, discipline, and dedication he demonstrated during his military service remained evident throughout his life. He carried a deep sense of strength, loyalty, and honor and was a man who valued family above all else, taking immense pride in those he loved carried a deep sense of strength, loyalty and dedication throughout his life. He was a man who valued family above all else and took immense pride in those he loved.

Jerry was preceded in death by his parents Arnold Ford and Georgia Smiley Johnston, his son-in-law Paul Donato, and his beloved grandson Spencer. He is survived by his sisters Janice (William) Kinsella, Joanne (Joseph) O'Brien, loving partner, Ellen "Peg" Blackadar, his daughters Mimi Johnston, Sandra (Alvin Boyt) May, Donna (Matthew) Harold, Kris Donato, and Kathryn (Lawrence) Jones, his sixteen cherished grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren.

Those who knew Jerry will remember his free spirit, his devotion to the people

closest to him, and his joy at seeing his family together and thriving. His presence brought guidance and unwavering support, and his loss will be deeply felt by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Though he may no longer walk beside his loved ones, the lessons he taught, the memories he created, and the love he shared will remain in their hearts forever. His family finds peace in knowing he leaves behind a legacy of love, resilience, and honor that will continue through generations to come.

A private Celebration of Life will be held by the family at a later date. Donations can be made in Jerry's memory to the organization that provided family housing at the VA hospital, The Fisher House Foundation, 111 Rockville Pike, Suite 420, Rockville, MD 20850.