



## Ralph Bernard Groome

June 14, 1949 - November 13, 2023

We are heartbroken to announce the death of our wonderful family member and a beautiful person, Ralph Bernard “Bernie” Groome, 74, of Summerfield, FL. He passed away on November 13, 2023, due to heart complications.

Bernie was born in Richmond, VA to Herman and Gladys Groome. He grew up with his younger brother, Larry, in the small town of Matoaca, Virginia (a town where everyone knew everyone). As a teen with a bicycle, he displayed a great work ethic, starting off with delivering newspapers followed by delivering Western Union telegrams for the Petersburg, VA office. He enjoyed swimming, watching baseball, and playing tennis with friends—and he discovered that he loved woodworking in the basement with his dad—something they were great at and for which they both shared a passion. Faith was always a big part of his life; he loved to read the bible, pray, and have gratitude for each day as a true gift.

He attended the Virginia Military Institute and was an outstanding student and a great friend to many. He graduated as a Second Lieutenant, but his interest in aeronautics sparked his passion for the field of Materials Engineering, and he went on to get his master’s degree from the University of Virginia. He then went to Augusta Law School where he received his law degree.

Bernie was a retired Navy Commander Reserve (Commander/Engineering

Duty 1445), uniquely serving in both the US Army and US Navy Reserve for a total of 28 years. His duties included ship repair, weapons station management, ship system engineering and various assignments in Combat Engineer Units. You couldn't miss him walking around town in his favorite 'Retired Navy' hats.

He worked at Dupont and Teledyne Brown Engineering, and supported projects at NASA over the years. During his career, Bernie was a Project Support Manager for the Space Exploration Programs and NASA Marshall Space Flight Center Materials Science Directorate, Project Manager for the Environmental Systems Division, and had various other lead roles in the space engineering programs.

When he was 32, he met the love of his life, Wanda, at Sunday School at their local church. He worked up the courage to ask her to go to lunch with him on a date at Pizza Inn on September 24th in Johnson City, Tennessee and they both realized on that date that they were a perfect match. They got married in Johnson City at the Church Chapel. Everyone couldn't help but notice how happy they were together, how much they respected each other, and how much they loved each other. They celebrated their 40th anniversary as a married couple the day before he passed away.

Bernie and Wanda were proud to start a family. They have one daughter, Gina Groome. As a family, they loved traveling in their silver van around the USA to see the sights, going to baseball games, making memories with family, attending church, and laughing together. Bernie accomplished many things—but among the biggest impacts he made were the way he wholeheartedly loved his family and being a father. He even used his impressive woodworking skills to build an amazing treehouse in the back yard for Gina and later an impressive entertainment center that Gina continues to cherish.

After he retired, he and Wanda settled in Summerfield, FL where they enjoyed the sunshine and a community full of great friends. Bernie became extremely involved in the Spruce Creek community and served as Boomer President for 5 years. He also held various positions, including head trustee on the Board of Trustees for 2 years at CUMC. His favorite Tuesday morning ritual was cooking and gathering for his Men's Prayer Breakfast group. He was also a guardian for the Florida Honor Flight program, where he escorted a World War II Veteran to Washington D.C.

Most recently, Bernie enjoyed going to social gatherings with friends, photography (he won several awards), traveling, playing softball, attending church, watching college football, and sharing jokes and funny stories (he had the best belly laugh). He was an amazing giver of advice, BBQ grill master on his 'Big Green Egg' grill, and had blue eyes like the ocean.

In addition to Wanda and Gina, he is survived by his brother, Larry Groome, and his grandson 'Jax' Wells (for whom he will always be remembered as "Pop Pop").

Bernie's funeral service will be held at Beyer's Funeral Home (134 N. Hwy 27/441, Lady Lake, FL 32159) with visitation on December 1, 2023 at 12:00 PM, followed by a funeral procession at 12:45 PM that will take attendees to Florida National Cemetery for a short military interment service at 2:30 PM.

A 'celebration of life' gathering will be held on January 24, 2023 at Spruce Creek Community Center at 1:30pm. This location will accommodate a large crowd and we will have opportunities to share memories, laugh, and reminisce about Bernie.

In lieu of flowers, please send memorial donations to the Wounded Warrior

Project or to his church 'home,' First Baptist Church at The Villages (16523 SE 76th Chatham Ave, The Villages, FL 32162).

# Cemetery Details

## Florida National Cemetery

6502 SW 102nd Avenue  
Bushnell, FL 33513

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 1. 12:00 PM (ET)

Beyers Funeral Home & Crematory - Lady Lake  
134 N US Highway 441  
Lady Lake, FL 32159  
(352) 753-4444

## Graveside Service

DEC 1. 2:30 PM (ET)

Florida National Cemetery  
6502 SW 102nd Avenue  
Bushnell, FL 33513

# Tribute Wall



“ *Beyers Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Ralph Bernard Groome*



---

**Beyers Funeral Home** - January 09, 2024 at 06:00 PM

MD

“ *I remember spending time with Gina in Huntsville, AL. Always laughing and cutting up. But most of all watching Uncle Bernie trying to stay at a certain weight for the Navy. This consisted of a lot of boiled cabbage soup. He would eat it, but he would wink at me and I knowing he wanted cake or something not healthy. But he never complained he just smiled. He took all the photos at my wedding in July of 2021 and made sure to capture every moment of the day so I could cherish the memories. He always had a camera or video recorder in his hand at family functions. I loved my Uncle Bernie, he was an amazing man with a big heart. Now I hope he is with my mom in Heaven and is telling her all about my wedding and how proud of me she would be. I will see you again Uncle Bernie, but we are going to miss you here.*

---

**Megan Dye** - November 21, 2023 at 10:52 AM

JC

*He was a great asset and friend to many in Spruce Creek South. He will be missed. Rest in peace with your Savior!*

---

**Jim and Beverly Comer** - November 21, 2023 at 01:56 PM

PL

*Bernie was a kind, gentle man. He was always willing to lend a helping hand to anyone in Spruce Creek South. The Lady Eagles softball team were fortunate to have Bernie take many of our team pictures. You will be missed. God speed Bernie.*

Patricia Longstaff - November 21, 2023 at 06:44 PM

RA

*Sweet - caring man - walked often past our house - stopped to chat - he will be missed.*

Renee Allen - November 22, 2023 at 06:39 AM

JB

*You will be missed by many my friend RIP Prayers for the family*

Joyce Bode - November 22, 2023 at 11:37 AM

JB

*We are so heartbroken to learn of the passing of our longtime friend, Bernie Groome. He and Wanda used to come and stay with us during Thanksgiving when her Mother and sister lived in Elizabethton, Tennessee. We live in Johnson City. He and my husband, Bill, always enjoyed visiting together while Wanda visited with her family. Then we all and Gina would drive to Elk Park, N.C. to get Christmas trees on Friday. We have pictures to remember these joyful times. There are many more memories and laughs that we shared. I just can't believe he is gone. We love you Wanda and Gina and are praying for God to give you strength and comfort.*

Judy Boone - November 22, 2023 at 03:35 PM

KL

*I miss my Uncle Bernie so much! I have SO MANY great memories. A few that stand out:*

- Visiting AL over the summer in the 90's when he worked down the street and he would come home for his lunch hour to eat with us. I thought it was really nice that he would stop in midday to get more time in with the family.*
- Going to those Huntsville Stars baseball games over the summer!*
- The trips in the silver van (with the stops at Cracker Barrel for the books on tape and dinner).*
- Him yelling "Fritz, sing!!"*
- Him coming by to visit recently at the cabin and going on local adventures with us. Watching him sit on the porch taking in the view and him appreciating the cinnamon rolls and fruit breakfasts so much.*
- Meeting us in Disney Springs for lunch this past January with a big smile and great conversation.*

---

**Krissy Lou** - November 22, 2023 at 10:27 PM

WA

*"My favorite memory is going with you to that restaurant in Florida with Groomepa and stuff."*

---

**Warren** - November 24, 2023 at 02:31 PM

RA

*How fortunate we are to have been able to call you our friend for the past 13 years. You will be missed by so many. Rest in Peace, Bernie.*

---

**Rich and Anne** - November 28, 2023 at 02:23 PM