



## Larry Grant Britner

December 17, 1940 - September 23, 2022

Larry G Britner passed away on Friday, September 23, 2022, due to complications of COPD. He was born in Lorain, Ohio in 1940 to John and Edna Britner as one of ten children. His parents fostered babies who he and his siblings helped to care for, instilling in them the qualities of nurture, empathy, and generosity at an early age. He spent his formative years in Saint Petersburg, Florida, which was still very wooded then, hunting rattlesnakes by Joe's Creek with his older brother David. Being smaller than most, he gained the nickname Pee Wee, which stayed with him throughout his life. But God help anyone who thought because of his stature that they could pick on him, even though those that did, after a good bruising, sometimes became his friends.

He was a freshman at Northeast High School in the year it first opened and graduated there in 1958. A few months later, he joined the Marine Corps where he became a drill instructor. He later served as an Army corpsman. His stints took him to Japan, Germany, and the Vietnam War. He married in 1962 and returned stateside in 1965 to start a civilian life with his wife, Eva Sue, and baby daughter, Valarie. Two years later, they had a son, William, and eventually moved to his wife's hometown of Leesburg.

In those early days, he played baseball and once played out a game with a broken hand because he was so involved that he didn't realize he was injured.

He also dabbled in art. He enrolled at Lake-Sumter Community College but soon dropped out as he became aware of the events concerning the Mỹ Lai massacre and was too troubled to continue his studies.

Most of his career was spent in retail and restaurant supervision. He believed that the best ideas came from employees and not from management, and being a hard worker himself, did what he could to encourage pride in a job well done and to promote from within. A fierce defender of the vulnerable, he had the presence of mind to do nothing during several other robberies but wrestled a loaded shotgun from a man who came into his shop because he could see the craziness in the man's eyes and was convinced someone was going to get hurt.

In his spare time, he collected and sold coins, something that started as a hobby and turned into a lucrative sideline with the guidance and support of his wife, who said that if he wanted the good stuff, he was going to have to pay top dollar. For a while, he became one of the better-known dealers in Central Florida, known for his honesty and fairness.

In his later life, he lost a leg to health issues but never lost his nerve. He could still scale a fence when he had the need or climb a tree to put up a tire swing. Though his 40-year marriage to Eva Sue had ended by then, they remained close. He found love again with his new wife, Luise, in 2010 after working together to help organize their fiftieth high school reunion. Always having a knack for research, he had an uncanny ability to find lost classmates and continued to help each subsequent year's classes with their reunions. In 2018, he was substantially involved in managing his sixtieth reunion and used the excess funds to set up a scholarship.

Throughout his life, he always had projects, whether it was in earlier days typing out baseball stats on his 1917 Underwood typewriter or later building

genealogies in Ancestry.com. His interests included history, religion and politics, all of which he would happily debate, often to others' chagrin. He took pride that he had applied to the position of manager to every baseball team in the league and had been turned down by each one. Despite a reputation as sometimes cantankerous, he loved people deeply and helped organize family reunions. If anyone was in need, even if he barely knew them, he was quick to offer a hand.

Seldom at a loss for words, he was known for his long stories and almost breathless gift of gab. In his motorized wheelchair, he could be seen all over downtown, wearing his Vietnam veteran hat, handing out American flags, and turning strangers into friends.

At 5'3" and 120 pounds, he had never let himself feel small. He is survived by his brother, Jerry, his sister, Doris, two children, eight grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren and many others. His brother David passed two months before him. In their youth, David could often be heard calling behind him, "Come on, Pee Wee."

If anyone is so inclined, in lieu of flowers, we request donations to Meals on Wheels or Suncoast Hospice, as both organizations were instrumental in Larry's care.

Donation Links:

Meals on Wheels

[https://give.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/page/38516/donate/1?ea.tracking.id=22\\_popup&\\_ga=2.131903567.1398092909.1664232639-1641007625.1664232639](https://give.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/page/38516/donate/1?ea.tracking.id=22_popup&_ga=2.131903567.1398092909.1664232639-1641007625.1664232639)

Suncoast Hospice Donation Link:

<https://suncoasthospice.org/online-donations/>



# Cemetery Details

## Bay Pines National Cemetery

10000 Bay Pines Blvd.  
Bay Pines, FL

# Previous Events

## Visitation and Service

OCT 6. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

R. Lee Williams & Son Funeral Home  
3530 49th Street N  
Petersburg, FL 33710  
(727) 527-1177  
rlwilliamsfh@yahoo.com

## Committal

OCT 6. 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Bay Pines National Cemetery  
10000 Bay Pines Blvd.  
Bay Pines, FL

# Tribute Wall

PC

“ I had the privilege I'm spending time over the phone with Larry following our reunion. Our talks were very wide-ranging. That is what I enjoyed about Larry. He was very open-minded, focused on helping people, and a great patriot who handed out flags from his wheelchair. He never lost his Marine Corps Spirit. I was proud to call Larry a good friend.

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**Paul Chatelier** - December 01, 2023 at 11:58 AM

RS

“ 3 files added to the album Larry's NEHS Reunion



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**Randall Schamberger** - October 14, 2022 at 05:21 PM

JV

“ When I told Larry our daughter had opened a bed-and-breakfast in the Dallas area, he and Luise came over. I really believe he wanted to meet my mom who was around 100 then.

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**joan Vetter** - October 06, 2022 at 11:03 PM

MN

“ He often frequented the Birchwood On Beach Drive , he was a pleasure to have conversation with and always had a plethora of American Flags that he handed out to whoever whoever would take one . I still have mine and it flies on my balcony in Downtown St Petersburg. How much more that flag is special today . He was good man and had a great sense of humor and an uncanny wit . He will be missed in downtown St Petersburg by so many . RIP

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**Misty Neal** - October 06, 2022 at 08:50 AM

DD

REST IN PEACE MY OLD FRIEND 🙏 To Valarie & Family

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**Dale Davis** - October 07, 2022 at 10:17 AM

JW

Larry(PeeWee) and his brother David are childhood friends and neighbors, growing up only a few blocks from Lealman Jr. High school. The most outstanding adventure story in my recollection of Larry's Joe's Creek tales was his account of his and brother David's exploration of the source of Joe's Creek, which they determined to be a large, crystal clear fresh water spring, located on the then( late 50s) Michael Flynn's Ranch which is now a large mobile home park located approximately within the boundaries of 28th St. N. and 38th Ave N. and 24th St. N. and 42nd Ave. North. I have been there and checked out the spring. It appears to flow approximately 10 to 15% that of Weeki Wachee! David Britner was my next door neighbor for many years. REST IN PEACE DAVID AND LARRY, YOU BOTH L MADE AND LEFT THIS PLANET A BETTER PLACE.

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**John Whitaker861@gmail.com** - October 20, 2022 at 12:25 PM

MH

“ I remember going to the flea market and helping him sale some of his coins from his coin collection.

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**Michelle Hudson** - September 27, 2022 at 05:14 PM

CG

*Peewee we had so many years of great events at my home with you,david,Buddy playing volleyball til dark. I'll Always remember you love forever. May you Rest in peace in God's ARMS along with your hero brother, David. ❤️🌹💔🇺🇸🇺🇸*

**Cherie Holden Gillette** - October 02, 2022 at 03:16 PM

MT

*Because of his devotion to our alma mater, Northeast High, Larry spent countless hours helping me find missing classmates. He was such a special man and I am blessed to have known him.*

**Marcia Turner** - October 06, 2022 at 09:45 AM

LM

*Such a nice man. He was my study hall buddy at Ne Hi*

**Lillian Pagano Mott** - October 06, 2022 at 01:27 PM

RS

*I just found out today of Larry's passing. We had a multi-class (55-59) NEHS reunion in June 2018. It was a tremendous success due to Larry's organizational skills and dedication to his alma mater. Due to the COVID disaster, we have been unable to return to St. Pete and the Wednesday breakfasts hosted by Larry. He will be missed b all who knew him. Rest in peace, Larry.*

*Randy Schamberger, NEHS Class of '56*

**Randall Schamberger** - October 14, 2022 at 04:56 PM



*I also only recently learned of Larry's passing. I was very impressed what is the depth of his thinking. Larry was a true patriot add friend. The last conversation I had with him was is telling me that he was going to visit Bay Pines to see what they had. I know Larry will be missed by many of us who knew him as an always smiling, friendly guy who wanted to help everyone as he passed out the American flag. He helped us appreciate each other. A legacy worth continuing..Thank you, Larry*

**Paul Chatelier** - October 19, 2022 at 01:43 PM