



## Arthur James Blanchard

November 25, 1923 - December 4, 2023

It takes fortitude, a sharp wit, a clean conscience, a heart full of love, and a little bit of luck to reach the milestone age of 100.

Arthur James Blanchard, MD (Jim) passed peacefully into Heaven on December 4, 2023. Jim celebrated his 100th birthday during the Thanksgiving holiday surrounded by his daughters, sons-in law, grandchildren and their spouses, and great grandchildren. The party was full of laughs, tears, and stories – a fitting tribute to man with an extraordinary legacy and joy-filled heart.

A courageous sailor, a caring doctor, a prolific artist, a curious hobbyist, an eager golfer, a steady fisherman, a skilled gardener, a gin rummy shark, and – most importantly – a wonderful husband and father, Jim Blanchard was a man of abundant talent and passion.

Jim was born on November 25, 1923, at home in Toronto, Ontario to Rose Sarah (Howes) and Alfred Michele Blanchard. At a young age the family moved to Toledo, Ohio. He attended St. Angela Hall Grade School and Central Catholic High School. Born with a heart for adventure, young Jim would spend his summers in Canada running barefoot from fishing hole to fishing hole with his dog, Lucky.

Following high school, Jim attended the University of St. Michael's in Toronto. World War II led him back to the United States where he continued his studies at the University of Toledo.

In 1943, Jim was called to active duty in the United States Navy Reserve. He enrolled in Middlebury College in Vermont while simultaneously attending Corp School at Sampson Naval Hospital in New York. In 1944, Jim moved to Chicago to begin medical school at Loyola University Chicago's Stritch School of Medicine, graduating in 1947.

On October 1, 1945, Jim married his high school sweetheart Mary Alice Hurley. For a brief period, he left the Navy to pursue private medical practice in Toledo. In 1948, Jim rejoined the Navy to practice otolaryngology at Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland.

At the onset of the Korean War, Jim was stationed aboard a naval hospital ship – the USS Benevolence. In 1950, Benevolence shipwrecked and sank miles off the coast of San Francisco. Jim's courage and resilience were on full display as he floated in the frigid waters of the San Francisco Bay, ultimately surviving the wreck. A fiercely loyal patriot to his country, Jim later went on to serve in Korea aboard another naval hospital ship, the USS Haven.

In 1951, Jim attended deep sea diving school in Washington, D.C. He received naval training for submarines in New London, Connecticut. Jim's medical credentials paired with his naval abilities led him to become a squad medical officer of eleven submarines. He had a lifelong admiration for the logo of the submariners, two dolphins and an anchor with a crown.

In 1954, Jim left the Navy returning to Toledo to again pursue private practice. He served the greater Toledo area as an ear, nose, and throat specialist for nearly 50 years, treating tens of thousands of patients. Jim was an active

member of the Toledo Academy of Medicine over 50 years. He was affiliated with several Toledo area hospitals including St. Vincent's, Toledo, Flower, St. Luke's, St. Charles, Mercy, and Fulton County. Dr. Jim Blanchard was of the old school, patient-dedicated physicians who routinely made house calls. He had conviction in his responsibility as a doctor.

Jim's interests ran the gamut – narrow gauge trains, gardening, painting, glass blowing, playing cards, fishing, playing golf, and following Notre Dame football. When not found at home, his office, or the hospital you would find Jim at Inverness Club where he served a term as club president. Jim was proud of his prolific, lush Tropicana roses and his plump, juicy blueberries. His Canadian adventures continued well into adulthood when he'd trek into the Great White North to pluck pike and walleye out of the lakes. His daughters called him a "Renaissance Man" and each proudly hang his beautiful landscape paintings in their homes.

In 2005, Jim and Mary retired permanently to Sarasota, Florida. He was an active parishioner at St. Thomas More Catholic Church and a longtime resident of Bay Village Senior Living.

Of all his accomplishments, Jim was most proud of his seven girls. Try as he might for a Blanchard son, God had other plans. As a father, he gave the girls a sense of security, stability, and unconditional love. He graciously provided a college education and a beautiful wedding for each daughter. Jim and Mary exemplified a strong, godly marriage rooted in love, commitment, and faith. The love of his life was his Mary. Today Jim and Mary are reunited in Heaven. One of Jim's favorite quotes was from Father Ted Hesburgh, former President of the University of Notre Dame, "The most important thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother." Of this, there was never any doubt.

Jim will be remembered by his family and friends as an easy going, get along kind of guy. He was also a fun and spirited competitor, particularly in golf. He enthusiastically played the game until age 95 often shooting below his age, and proudly beating guys decades younger than him. Jim enjoyed his life so much he often said, "I guess I was born lucky." Jim had the character, values, and faith it takes to live a full, rich life. He kept it simple. Be kind to everyone. Smile!

The grandkids will always remember their Papa's constitution-worthy, perfect handwriting on their birthday checks. Papa always had a pack of M&M's holstered in his pocket for grandkids and great grandkids.

Jim is survived by his seven daughters and their spouses including Mary Jo Milbank (Rob), Jane Weirich (Bill), Connie Sullivan (Tim), Barbara Murtagh (Bill), Denise Gardner (Fred), Jeanne Hanlon (Tim), and Patte Martin (Bob). His full and beautiful family tree includes 21 grandchildren and spouses and 38 great grandchildren! These 88 descendants are the proudest part of his legacy. He is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews.

Jim was preceded in death by his cherished wife of 69 years, Mary, his siblings Richard, Gerry, and Rosemarie, and his beloved grandson Michael Weirich.

A Catholic funeral Mass and service will be held at St. Thomas More Catholic Church in Sarasota, Florida on Saturday December 16, 2023, at 9:30am. A reception will follow at the church.

The family requests memorials in honor of Jim Blanchard's life be made to St. Ursula Academy in Toledo, Ohio ([toledosua.org](http://toledosua.org)), St Thomas More Catholic Church in Sarasota Florida ([stthomasmoresrq.org](http://stthomasmoresrq.org)), or Bay Village Senior Living in Sarasota, Florida ([bayvillage.org](http://bayvillage.org)).

Condolences may be shared with the family online at Toale Brothers Funeral home ([toalebrothers.com](http://toalebrothers.com)).

# Previous Events

## Funeral Mass

DEC 16. 9:30 AM (ET)

St. Thomas More Catholic Church  
2506 Gulf Gate Drive  
Sarasota, FL 34231

# Tribute Wall

DN

“ So sorry for your loss, but your amazing Father lived a very full life. He was a very kind man and I knew he was accomplished, but little did I know of all his interests and accomplishments. It is never easy to lose a parent, even at 100. I know my late husband had the highest respect for Dr. Jim Blanchard. With deepest sympathy,  
Donna Pollex Najarian

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**Donna Najarian** - January 15, 2024 at 01:17 PM

MM

“ My condolences to all the Blanchard family from a long ago next door neighbor. We lived next door to each other on Orchard Trail in Toledo. I was happy to call Connie my best friend in the late 1950's.  
Marilyn Mazziotti

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**Marilyn Mazziotti** - December 17, 2023 at 03:30 PM