



Joseph William Skrabak

December 17, 1923 - January 3, 2016

Joseph Skrabak of Venice passed away on January 3, 2016. He was 92. Joseph was born in Bukova, Slovakia. He came to the United States at age 5, to live in the Port Vue section of McKeesport, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh. He worked to help support his family while attending McKeesport High School. He worked in a steel mill while attending classes at the University of Pittsburgh for one year.

In 1942, Joseph volunteered for the Army and completed his basic training in Hattiesburg, Mississippi where he excelled as a sharpshooter. He was assigned to the Reconnaissance Troop in the 85th Division, as part of the 5th Army. The 85th was a mechanized cavalry unit, the eyes and ears of the division, doing scouting and information gathering, as well as special assignments. Joseph fought in Africa and Italy was part of the force that liberated Rome. He was awarded the Bronze Star and received a field promotion to Corporal.

Joseph went to Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio on the GI Bill where he met Virginia Colby who would become his wife of 65 years. After graduation, they settled in Metuchen, New Jersey, where Joseph was a dedicated husband and father of four children. He served as Assistant and Head Scoutmaster of BSA Troop 15 in Metuchen as well as serving as an assistant coach for Little League baseball. Joseph worked as an applications

chemist for Inmont Corp., a printing ink company. He would work for Inmont for his entire career, including moves to Cincinnati, OH and Mahwah, NJ, and was awarded one patent.

He retired in 1989 and moved to Venice where he became an active member of Jacaranda Country Club. Joseph enjoyed playing golf several times each week, and kept a very productive garden, including bringing some produce to Jacaranda CC kitchen. Joe also enjoyed traveling with Virginia all over the world. He was able to return to the farm in Italy where he spent one Christmas during World War II, as well as return to his home town of Bukova, Slovakia where his relatives remain today.

Joseph was pre-deceased by his wife, Virginia, his parents, John and Caroline Skrabak, and his sister Ann (Gaska). He is survived by his children, James (Nancy), John (Caroline), Carolyn Casey (Tim), and William (Kathryn), and his sisters, Mary (McMullen), Ernestine (Ponte) and Helen (Palhidai). He is survived by eight grandchildren, Benjamin and James Skrabak, Christopher and Annie Skrabak, Robert and William Casey, and Madison and Dylan Skrabak. He is also survived by an extended family of nieces, nephews and their families.

Relatives and friends are invited to an interment service at Sarasota National Cemetery on March 4, at 11 AM, followed by a Celebration of Life reception at Jacaranda Country Club at 1 PM. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to The Venice Presbyterian Church, 825 The Rialto, Venice, FL 34285, to Tidewell Hospice, 5955 Rand Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34238, the Wounded Warrior Project or the National World War II Museum.