

CAPT. JAMES RONALD “RON” FISHER, USN, RET.

Aug 25, 1935 – Oct 31, 2023

Capt. James Ronald “Ron” Fisher, USN, Ret. (Aug 25, 1935 – Oct 31, 2023): Son of William Benton Fisher, Sr. and Acenah Mills Fisher; beloved Brother to a dozen wonderful siblings (survived by Alice, Bobby, Paul, David, and Kenny); Husband to Lenyr Vallejo Fisher; proud Father of Benton (Joan), Wes (Funn), Fred (Carol), and Martin (Lauren); supportive Stepfather to Marsha and Marco and Step-Grandfather and Great-grandfather to their offspring; and joyful Grandfather to Katie, Anna, Hannah, Jack, Julia, Ellis, Mallory, Ryan, and Lily. He is also survived by his first wife Margaret Corletti.

He was born in a modest three-bedroom house on Young Street in Bemis, TN on August 25, 1935. From a young age, Ronald displayed a natural sense of happiness and intelligence and participated actively in academics and athletics at the local schools, including playing on J. B. Young High School’s first football team in 1949. Accomplishments include earning All-District in basketball his senior year (1952-1953), finishing both 2nd and 3rd in the Bemis Brothers Bag Company essay contest (he wrote 2 essays!), representing Bemis at Volunteer Boys State in 1952, and running the local swimming pool and projector at the Bemis theater.

After graduating from J. B. Young High School in 1953, he attended the University of Tennessee in Knoxville for one year, preparing to pursue his appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA). He graduated near the top of his class with honors from the Academy in 1958, and enjoyed a distinguished Navy career, with most of his service in the Submarine force. He served at the outset of the Nuclear Navy; graduated first in each of his Submarine, Nuclear Propulsion, and Engineering Duty Officer schools; served as Executive Officer (XO) on four nuclear submarines; received the Legion of Merit; and retired with the rank of Captain in 1984. During his career he continued to pursue his academic studies, graduating from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (where he served as a research fellow) and obtaining a Master’s Degree in Business Management. His contributions to the security of the nation and the field of naval engineering were commendable.

After “retiring” (a word that he asserted did not apply to him), Ronald continued to develop his extensive experience in engineering, management, logistics, education and training, and the judicial system. He launched the Defense Fire Protection Association (DFPA), a scientific research and educational foundation dedicated to improving the safety and survivability of our military forces and vessels. He served as a volunteer in a variety of capacities for communities, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington (VA), and youth sports organizations, and he ran for political office at both the state and Federal levels. He spent the last chapter of his life as an advocate for the people, committed to fairness, justice, peace, and the rapid implementation of the U.N. Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs). This also included a paramount shift in thinking to seek to permanently end all wars, occupations, threats of force, and violence, and resolve disputes by pacific means.

He was “ahead of the times” as an early enthusiast of fax machines in the 1970s and personal computers in the 1980s. His “portable” video-cassette recorder weighed 30 pounds – and was a Betamax. He possessed multiple 8-track players – including in the car. He regularly quizzed his children, and then grandchildren, on matters of science and math – frequently showing how the answer could be determined with a slide rule. He also perpetuated traditions common to both the Fisher family and the Navy: drinking coffee and iced tea in large quantities, and eating what and when he wanted, for many decades frequenting Edy’s rotisserie chicken, the Lost Dog Café, and Peking Gourmet.

He frequently proclaimed that he enjoyed a “charmed life” and was grateful for his upbringing in a small town, for the camaraderie of his Navy experiences, and for his family and friends throughout his life. Consistent with his unflinching desire to make the world a better place, his wish is for all to “join the movement” and work relentlessly with other passionate people and organizations such as Global Citizen.

<https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/>

Throughout his lifetime, he consistently responded to the challenges and demands he encountered by remaining composed and “stoic” (a practice he espoused), qualities that endeared him to all who met him. These qualities also served him well in the face of more recent health challenges, as his calmness eased the difficulties associated with strokes, AFib, and COPD.

Despite facing significant health challenges over the past decade, including multiple strokes, cancer, extensive blockage of his coronary arteries, significant infections and sepsis, and COVID, Ronald’s resilience and will to live were astonishing. He was a testament to the strength of the human spirit. After several days of receiving Hospice care, Ronald passed away peacefully at the age of 88. His memory will forever live on in the hearts of those who were fortunate to know him. He leaves behind a legacy of unwavering optimism, dedication to service, and a profound impact on the lives of many. Ronald Fisher will be remembered not only as a dedicated Naval officer and loving family man, but as a beacon of hope and positivity in a world he worked tirelessly to make better.

The family is planning a private service at a later date. In lieu of flowers, all are encouraged to work expeditiously to end poverty, eliminate wars, and hold government officials accountable. Donations may be made to support the Unitarian Church’s Social Justice programs and Justice High School Rowing, which he served as an officer and active volunteer for the many years that his sons rowed on the team.

<https://www.uucava.org/social-justice/>

<https://justicerowing.org/product/donation/>



James Ronald “Ron” Fisher
J. B. Young High School – Bemis, TN



Capt. James Ronald “Ron” Fisher
United States Navy

In loving memory by Ron’s sons: Benton, Wes, Fred, and Martin