

John Giles Herbein



Captain John G. Herbein, USNR (Ret.), of Johnstown, PA, died on 3 December 2020. He was 82 years old.

“Jack” was born on 13 April 1938 in Macedon, NY, to John S. and Julia (Giles) Herbein. A high school athlete, he graduated second in his class from Birdsboro High School (1956). At the Naval Academy, he was a three-time boxing champion and a varsity soccer fullback.

Upon graduation in 1960, he married Sara E. Rea of Gibraltar, PA.

John served on Navy destroyers for seven years in the Atlantic and Mediterranean fleets. He was weapons officer on PURDY (DD-734); ASW officer on BEATTY (DD-756); and chief engineer on MOALE (DD-

693) and GAINARD (DD-706). He graduated with the first Destroyer School class and attended Admiral Rickover’s Navy Nuclear Power School, where he qualified as engineer officer of the watch (EOOW).

In 1967, John left active duty and worked in various positions at the nuclear generation plants in Rowe, MA, Saxton, PA, and at Three Mile Island. He joined the Naval Reserve in 1968, commanding various units, and was Inspector General for Readiness Command Region 4, Philadelphia. In March 1979, John was directed to leave his two-week Reserve duty at the Philadelphia Navy Yard and return to Three Mile Island to deal with the TMI-2 reactor crisis. John assisted with the re-organization and clean-up of TMI until 1982, when he was transferred to Penelec as Vice President of Generation, responsible for the Western Pennsylvania coal, oil and hydro plants. Later, he was named VP of Generation for all of GPU’s fossil plants in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. John retired from the Reserve in 1990, and from GPU/Penelec in 1996.

His military awards include the Navy Expeditionary Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Expert Pistol Medal and Navy Achievement Medal.

In retirement, John taught Garfield Middle School student’s safety and marksmanship. He was a certified NRA instructor and member of Johnstown Rifle and Pistol Club. He was also a powerlifter—winning numerous contests and holding several deadlift records, training regularly at the Johnstown YMCA.

Jack is survived by his wife of 37 years, Angela (Casale) of Williamsport, PA; children, Michael, Christine, Jeffrey and Steven; and six grandchildren. He was predeceased by his parents and brother, William.

January-February 2021 Shipmate