

Calvin Richard McConnell



Calvin McConnell, 84, of Independence Twp., died at home surrounded by his family on December 26, 2022. Born at home in Independence Township on May 7, 1938, son of the late Frederick King and Anna Marie (Neugebauer) McConnell. Beloved father of Amy McConnell (David) Schaarsmith and loving grandfather and “Thunder Chief” of Julia Claire and Katherine Ann Schaarsmith. Dear brother of Marion, Theodore, Edwin, and the late Harry McConnell. Kind and generous “Uncle” to many family members, friends, neighbors, employees, and customers of McConnells’ Farm.

Cal was a 1956 graduate of Neville Island High School. He played football for the United States Naval Academy, from which he graduated in 1960. He then joined the United States Air Force. In the 1960s, he manned nuclear missile silos in Wyoming, where he also built his first cabin by hand and enjoyed hunting mule deer. Cal served in Saigon during the Vietnam War, withstanding the 1968 Tet Offensive and earning a Bronze Star. After returning to the United States in 1970, he served at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. and Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. Cal retired from military service in 1980 and returned to McConnell’s Farm in 1982, where he and his brother Ed planted thousands of peach and apple trees and expanded on the work of their parents Fred and Anna, and of previous generations.

There, Cal continued a different kind of service – one that endured for the next 40 years, as he helped improve the farm and raise some of the finest peaches and apples in the country. Possessed of an unflagging work ethic, generous spirit, deep humility, quiet charisma, and self-deprecating sense of humor, Cal offered help to anyone who needed it and advice only to those who asked. He had a penchant for good-natured teasing, loved to tell and hear a good joke and was the master of many memorable pranks, especially on April Fool’s Day. He became an essential and beloved mentor to generations of younger family members and employees, who learned much about work, the world and human nature from “Uncle Cal.” Always shy of attention, Cal nevertheless earned the love and admiration of many good friends, good neighbors and good dogs – always good dogs – throughout his lifetime. He will be dearly missed by all.

Tatalovich Funeral Home