Frederick Noel Jerding



Captain Frederick "Fred" Noel Jerding, U.S. Navy (Retired), passed away on October 24, 2026, at Park Springs in Stone Mountain, Georgia, at the age of 88. Fred will be remembered as a husband, father, and grandfather–and a Navy officer who spent his career quietly serving and protecting his country beneath the sea. Those who knew him appreciated a very smart, disciplined man who liked nothing better than a task to work on and accomplish, loved technology gadgets, and singing–and especially in his later years, friends remember his kindness and sweet demeanor.

Fred was born on September 17, 1938, the son of Barney and Dorothy Gildroy Jerding, and grew up in Hayward, California, in the San Francisco Bay Area. His father worked as a ship builder and as an airfield mechanic on Yerba Buena Island, and his mother worked at the local school. As a child Fred dreamed of being in the Navy when he grew up — and he did exactly that.

Fred entered the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis and graduated in 1960. In his final year at the Academy, while home in the Bay Area, he was introduced at a party at Mills College to a young dietitian named Marilyn Roberts. Marilyn was a wonderful dancer and Fred was not, so before their next date he quietly took dance lessons. He courted her in his Austin-Healey convertible and later a Porsche 356, and over Christmas, when Marilyn's father called to say she was unhappy being away from Fred and wanted to fly back early, Fred knew. He proposed soon after, and they were married in June 1961 in Hayward.

Fred's 26-year Navy career was spent in the nuclear submarine service, being personally selected by Admiral Rickover. After nuclear power training and Submarine School in 1961, he served on six submarines, completing 90-day deterrent patrols in the Atlantic and Pacific. His family heard stories — told only as much as he was allowed — of patrols where only a handful of people knew where the boat was, of a run-in with a Soviet submarine, of a rare surfacing through the Arctic ice to stretch their legs and take pictures, and of one memorable trip home from the Washington coast with Christmas trees stowed on the missile deck. He served as Executive Officer and then fulfilled a lifetime achievement as Commanding Officer of the nuclear ballistic missile submarine USS Ulysses S. Grant (SSBN-631). Following his sea duty, Fred served in the Pentagon with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and he retired as a Captain on November 1, 1986. Along the way he earned a Master's degree in Operations Analysis from the Naval Postgraduate School. His decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Navy Achievement Medal, the Naval Expeditionary Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Navy Unit Citation, the Navy Unit Commendation, and the Command at Sea insignia. His service is honored on the Peachtree Corners Veterans Monument in Georgia. After retiring from the Navy, Fred continued his career as a systems analyst with Systems Planning & Analysis doing strategic consulting for the Department of Defense, retiring in 2005.

After posts in Pearl Harbor, San Diego, and Connecticut, Fred and Marilyn raised two sons, Dean (1970) and Grant (1972), through tours of duty in Charleston, South Carolina; Norfolk and Newport News, Virginia; and finally Springfield, Virginia. During this time they made close, lifelong military friends. Fred was proud of his boys, both of whom achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. The family's Boxer, Nuke, was a fitting name for a nuclear submariner's dog. For 26 years Fred and Marilyn were members of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Springfield, and his faith remained very important to him throughout his life. They built an incredible friend group there who remain together today.

In 2006, Fred and Marilyn moved to Park Springs in Stone Mountain, Georgia, to be near their son Dean's family, and they cherished being part of their grandchildren's lives as they grew up. Fred loved to sing and enjoyed Park Springs choir. He enjoyed church music, classical music, and musicals — The Sound of Music was a favorite, along with Star Wars. Fred became the “IT Guy” for Park Springs and both he and Marilyn were active volunteers over their 20+ years there. Fred loved to sail, had a lifelong appreciation for cars, and he was a runner for many years, and worked out regularly. He ate his oatmeal in the morning, stayed up too late at night tinkering on his computer, and liked most everything set in front of him. Fred and Marilyn loved having the grandchildren over to eat in the Bistro, swim in the saltwater pool, play board games, and do arts & crafts.

Fred was preceded in death by his parents; his half-sister, Jacky Fugman; his beloved wife of 60 years, Marilyn Roberts Jerding, in 2022; and his son, Grant Jerding (Christy, of Virginia), in 2002. He is survived by his son Dean Jerding (Marcia) of Atlanta, Georgia; grandchildren Carson (Cherish), Lexi, and Lainey; Marilyn's brother, Ralph Roberts Jr. (JoAnn), of California; his cousin Jean Groth of Hawaii; and many friends.

Wages and Sons Funeral Home