



## Louis Lenzer

Louis (Lou) Lenzer, a 54 year resident of Richardson, Texas, passed away August 6, 2014 at age 93. He was the son of Herman and Mary Lenzer of Cincinnati, Ohio. Lou was preceded in death by his wife of 71 years Barbara A Lenzer; his sons William F. and Robert G. Lenzer; his parents and brothers Henry, Eddie, Herman, Clarence, and Albert; sisters Marie, Emilia, and Florence. He is survived by his sister Irma Gutierrez of Cincinnati, daughter Barbie L. Lenzer of Richardson, and his son Bruce L. Lenzer of Williamsburg, Virginia. In addition, Lou is survived by 7 grandchildren (Julie Lenzer-Kirk, Mark Lenzer, Bill Lenzer Junior, Jon Lenzer, Anthony Lenzer, and Christy & Nathan Hicks); 11 great grandchildren (Sydney and Madison Kirk; Dalton, Gracie Emily, and Carter Lenzer; Conner, Colton and Christian Lenzer; Carson & Kyle Lenzer), and numerous nieces and nephews. Lou had 1 step grandson, John Newton and 3 step grandchildren, John Paul (JP), Samantha, and Matthew Newton. Lou grew up in the German community of Cincinnati and attended school at St. Monica Catholic Church. When Lou was in eighth grade during the Great Depression, he dropped out of school because his only shirt ripped while he was getting some equipment off a shelf in Science class. He delivered newspapers and performed a variety of other odd jobs to help his family make ends meet during the difficult time of the Depression. At age 15, during the Great Depression, he joined the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and served two tours of duty. The first tour was in Northern Idaho at Camp Devil's Elbow. Under the command of the US Army, Lou fought

forest fires and performed conservation and reforestation work. Notably, in August 1936, he and his fellow CCC crew hiked over 60 miles to help fight the Heavens Peak fire in Glacier National Park. He fought several other fires during the winter months when temperatures fell to 40 - 50 degrees below zero. Lou's second CCC tour was in Las Vegas working on the Hoover Dam project. However, instead of enduring cold, he had to adjust to desert heat. At one point he suffered heat stroke when temperatures soared to 115 degrees. During his stint in Las Vegas, he and his best friend from Cincinnati learned to gamble. Except for five dollars a month, \$25 dollars of \$30 earned from CCC duty was sent to help his family back in Cincinnati. Setting aside a dollar or two of the \$5 per month, learning to gamble in Vegas, was turned into additional funds for his needs and that of his family back in Cincinnati. Shortly after the surprise attack and bombing of Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, Lou married Barbara Yeager in Cincinnati on January 15, 1942. Lou subsequently joined the United States Navy to join in the War effort to defend our great country from the Empire of Japan and its ambitions to conquer the Pacific and invade the United States Homeland. He quickly became a gunnery instructor at Great Lakes Naval Training Center. He later went on to serve aboard a Fletcher Class destroyer, USS KIMBERLY DD521, as a 1st class gunners mate and served as their chief gunnery/petty officer until the end of the war. The KIMBERLY was assigned to the Pacific Theater in Bull Halsey's Third Fleet and Task force 38. During his Naval experience he dodged demise several times including surviving the Halsey Typhoons off the Philippines and Guam where three of his sister destroyers capsized and sank, and a Kamikaze attack at the invasion of Okinawa that killed 17 of his crew and 23 missing in action. At the time of the Kamikaze attack, Lou had been dispatched to another ship to repair guns that were malfunctioning. The location of the Kamikaze strike was close to his battle station where it was highly likely he would have been among the fatalities. During the Halsey Typhoon, Lou recalled he forgot to check one of the gun mounts to make sure it was secure before they entered the Typhoon. He braved driving rain, high

seas tossing the destroyer like a cork in the water, and high wind making it almost impossible to get to the gun mount in question. After making sure the mount was secure, he turned to face a monstrous wave starting to crest a short distance from his position on the ship. He looked to the stern and noticed light beaming out of a hatch left open. He was briefly puzzled as this was not the hatch he used to come on deck. He dashed toward the hatch and jumped through the opening feet first grabbing the rungs of the hatch and simultaneous pulling the hatch closed. The cresting wave crashed hard on the deck. The impact from the wave and slippery rungs on the hatch caused Lou to lose his grip. Consequently, he fell straight down three decks landing on the 4th deck and hitting his knee on a rung of the ladder. He suffered with the knee injury for weeks, but kept on performing his duties as if nothing happened. The USS KIMBERLY was attacked numerous times by Japanese aircraft which his ship was credited for shooting down. While his ship was finishing repairs from the Kamikaze damage at Mare Island Navy Yard in San Francisco, Lou was approached by officers of the USS INDIANPOLIS (a heavy cruiser), and subsequently turned down their offer for him to accept a chief gunnery position aboard their ship. Lou was prompted to decline the position on the INDIANAPOLIS recalling the words his chief imparted to him in basic training, that "he would do well in the Navy if he kept his mouth shut and didn't volunteer for anything." The INDIANPOLIS sailed a few days later to drop off the Atomic bomb at Tinian and then on its way to Leyte Gulf to prepare for the invasion of Japan, was torpedoed and sunk. Of the 1600 crew of the INDIANAPOLIS, only a few hundred survived. Lou was among the very first Naval shore parties to walk on Japanese soil at Yokosuka Naval Ship Yard in Tokyo. In Tokyo Bay, his ship, USS KIMBERLY DD 521, was anchored directly next to the battleship USS MISSOURI BB63 where he witnessed the surrender of Japan. After the surrender, his destroyer was the sole escort of the USS MISSOURI back to Hawaii, through the Panama Canal, and then onto Norfolk Naval Ship Yard where they dropped off the MISSOURI, and his

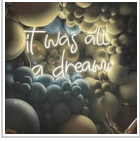
ship sailing on to Wilmington, Delaware for Victory over Japan Day. His ship was credited with 5 battle stars for active combat service during World War II. A sister ship, the Fletcher Class destroyer USS KIDD, named after admiral Kidd of the USS ARIZONA which was sunk at Pearl Harbor during the Japanese surprise attack, is a fully restored Fletcher Class destroyer and floating museum in Baton Rouge, Louisiana where some artifacts from the USS KIMBERLY are displayed. It is configured exactly like Lou's ship the USS KIMBERLY DD521. Lou was heard commenting on numerous occasions, the grace and hand of God protected him on the high seas of the Pacific and saw him through the difficult days of the war. Today, the USS MISSOURI is a floating museum and moored next to where the USS ARIZONA was sunk during the Pearl Harbor attack. Both ships together mark the beginning and end of the War with Japan. After the intensity of the War, having avoided the jaws of death on more than one occasion, and considering his wife and son, William (Bill) born January 1943, Lou decided to discharge from the Navy in November of 1945 and eventually found his way into selling insurance. After discharging from the Navy, he later took his General Education Development (GED) exam to obtain a high school equivalency education certificate. In 1949, Lou, his wife Barbara, and first son William (Bill), moved to Texas. Barbara suffered from severe asthma attacks due to the burning of coal, in Cincinnati, for heat and power back in the day. After several intensive and critical attacks requiring hospitalization, doctors treating Barbara told her and Lou that it was best they move South to a warmer and less hostile climate and to avoid the conditions aggravating Barbara's condition. Therefore, it was on to the State of Texas! When settled in Texas, Lou went on to St. Mary's University in San Antonio earning his degree and College of Life Underwriters certificate. He also obtained his securities licenses and earned his accreditation as a Certified Financial Planner. Lou and the family moved around the State initially settling in Dallas, then to Wichita Falls, to San Antonio, Harlingen, and then finally back to Dallas/Richardson for the duration of his life. During the early years in Texas, Barbara and Lou had their other

three children Robert (Bob) born in Dallas, Bruce born in Harlingen, and Barbie born in Dallas. Lou helped numerous companies and individuals with estate and investment planning. He retired from Employers Insurance of Texas in 1982 at the age of 62. Lou had also served a short time on the Employers Insurance Board of Directors. In 1959, Lou's second son Robert (Bob's) was diagnosed with cancer of the kidney. Doctors informed Lou and his wife Barbara, that Bob's condition was essentially terminal and his chances of survival were slim to none. It was during this time, seeking answers and support; Lou joined the American Cancer Society and remained active in the organization over 30 years. Miraculously, Robert (Bob) did survive and was declared cured of cancer at age 13. Unfortunately, however, Bob suffered brain trauma later thought to have been from the anesthesia used for his 7 hour cancer surgery to remove his right kidney. In addition, Bob had a couple early childhood head injuries which, along with the effects from the anesthesia used in surgery, was thought to have contributed to learning and social disabilities. Due to these types of challenges, Lou along with his wife Barbara looking for support answers, reached out to the Catholic organization known as "Order of Alhambra" for the learning disabled. Lou and Barbara became active servants and participants in the organization and over the years involved, worked several Special Olympics events in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area. During his career, Lou became an accomplished public speaker serving as Master of Ceremonies and keynote speaker for many special events. In particular his Insurance Sales motivational speeches lead to record insurance sales among the Employers Insurance sales force. Results were so impressive, several directors and executives of the company begged Lou to rescind his retirement and stay on. However, he was tired of company politics and not being appreciated for what he was really worth and capable of contributing. So, he was ready to hang up corporate life and embark on a new chapter of life. After retirement Lou continued selling insurance and estate planning services as a sole proprietor. He started the Veterans Day Parade at St. Paul's Church, which later grew into a significant event which has

continued every year since its inception. The parade included City of Richardson police and fire departments as well as the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Lou was an avid golfer and bowler and enjoyed taking the family on vacations, fishing, camping, and hunting with the boys. One notable vacation was taking the family to Idaho and staying at Devil's Elbow State Park which had been the very site of his CCC camp in 1936-1937. Lou was a devoted member of Saint Paul the Apostle Catholic Church in Richardson Texas over the 50+ years living in Richardson, where he served as an usher and was involved in numerous other church functions. His church and civic services included: St. Paul the Apostle Church Mens club Knights of Columbus 3rd degree Council 12021 4th degree Assembly 1087 Past Faithful Navigator International Order of Alhambra (for the developmentally disabled) Helped mentally handicapped and disabled children He and wife Barbara worked several Special Olympics events in the Dallas area. [www.orderalhambra.org](http://www.orderalhambra.org) American Cancer Society 20 years Dallas Chapter 12 years on the State Board, including Executive Director [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org) His life was characterized by many contributions to charitable and benevolent causes. His integrity and honesty were above reproach. His kindness, devotion to family, and willingness to help others, as well as his infectious sense of humor were unparalleled and a hallmark of his character. His life was the epitome and essence of the saying Live, Love, and Laugh....and a little bit of his favorite Liquor, Jack Daniels! Lou suffered from Congestive Heart Failure and spent his last 2 months and 6 days at his son Bruce's home in Williamsburg, Virginia supported by Compassionate Care Hospice. Compassionate Care did an outstanding job supporting Lou and the family. In his last days, Lou requested prayers for his entry into the presence of Christ our Lord who was the only perfect person to walk the earth. One of Lou's favorite sayings was "There was only one perfect person in the world, and they nailed him to a cross." He, Christ, was crucified, and raised from the dead that we may all live an eternal life together forever. Despite the frailties of the human condition, Lou lived and

followed Christ's example to best of his abilities. Lou imparted his examples and aspects of God's love, in the lives of family, friends, and others his life touched. Rosary service will be held at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Richardson, Texas Friday August 22, at 7:00 PM with a viewing and wake to follow at 1322 Northlake Drive, in Richardson. Funeral Mass will be conducted Saturday August 23rd, 11:00 AM at St. Paul's Catholic Church with a reception to follow. Graveside and entombment services (family only) will be at Calvary Hill Cemetery after the Church reception. RSVP for the Viewing and Wake to Bruce or Barbie Lenzer at: Barbie [email protected] or Bruce at [email protected] In Lieu of Flowers, donations can be made in memory of Louis H Lenzer to: 1.) Compassionate Care Hospice Foundation 248 East Chestnut Hill Rd., Suite 4, Newark DE 19713 Address correspondence to Rozie Zappo - Program Director. Phone 302-368-8944 or 302-766-2997 [www.cchnet.net](http://www.cchnet.net) 2.) Saint Paul's Catholic Church [www.saintpaulchurch.org](http://www.saintpaulchurch.org) 3.) Wounded Warriors [www.woundedwarriorproject.org](http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org)

# Tribute Wall



“ *To the wonderful daughter of Mr Lewis Lenzer whom we met last Wednesday Dec 21, 2022 on the boat going to the Arizona @ Pearl Harbor, I want to tell you I posted on social media about your brave Father, Lewis and your love for him to go on your honeymoon to honor him! Thank you Mr Lenzer for your bravery to fight for us all on behalf of America! We pray for you all! Sue & Alden Meier*

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**Sue Flynn-Meier** - December 26, 2022 at 08:59 AM