



John D. Bruen

October 19, 1930 - July 17, 2017

John D. Bruen of Springfield VA, age 86, died on 17 July at his home after a long battle with cancer. He leaves behind his devoted family and the love of his life, Ann, with whom he just celebrated his 60th wedding anniversary. He was preceded in death by his parents, John and Kathleen Bruen, and his brothers George and James.

Born in New York and raised in Chicago, Illinois, he entered the U.S. Army from the Illinois National Guard. Beginning his military career as an enlisted soldier, he served for a total of 38 years and spent over 50% of his commissioned time in command. He is a veteran of the Korean and Vietnam wars. His awards include the DoD Distinguished Service Medal, the Department of the Army Distinguished Service Medal, three Legions of Merit, and two Bronze Stars. Belgium awarded General Bruen the Grand Officer of the Order of the Crown for his work in Europe. He was inducted into the U.S. Army Infantry OCS Hall of Fame and the U.S. Army Transportation Corps Hall of Fame. After military retirement, he held several leadership positions in industry and defense. He was the Vice Chairman International of the U.S. Continuous Acquisition and Life-Cycle Support (CALS) Industry Steering Group. General Bruen held several volunteer positions, including the Board of Directors of The Retired Officers Association (TROA) as well as Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion at his parish, Holy Spirit Catholic Church, and Prison Ministry.

He is survived by his wife Ann, his 4 children, Michael, Kathleen, Thomas and Lisa, their spouses and children, his sisters Kathleen and Doreen, and their families.

Relatives and friends may call at Jefferson Funeral Chapel, 5755 Castlewellan Dr. Alexandria, VA on Saturday, July 22, 2017, from 2 to 4 and 6 to 8 p.m.
Mass of Christian Burial at Ft. Myer Old Post Chapel with burial in Arlington National Cemetery at a later date.

Tribute Wall



“ *John D. Bruen*

October 27, 2022 at 09:45 PM



“ *Worked for this great man many years ago!*

MGWatts - November 07, 2021 at 12:13 AM



“ *I am deeply saddened to have just read his obituary. I had no idea he had passed. I worked for LTG Bruen in Kaiserslautern, Germany at the 21st Support Command as the only female Warrant Officer on his immediate staff. I worked closely with Ann, his beautiful wife. I loved working for him! He held his staff and soldiers to a higher standard and never expected any less of himself. I learned so much from him and could always make him laugh. Some would say he didn't have a sense of humor but he did. My prayers for his lovely family. He made a big impact on me and my Army career.*

Dennise Bridgers - June 04, 2019 at 08:07 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Wedding Picture*



Jefferson Funeral Chapel - January 28, 2019 at 09:39 AM



“ I just saw the obituary today (22JUL17), and cannot make the memorial, but wanted to write a few words of thanks to his very supportive family and friends from around the world.

What a man! What a leader! I was a young Navy LT assigned to his command in Washington DC for two years ('81 - '83), when he was in command of MTMC HQ. He also provided the keynote speech at my graduation from the Navy's Transportation School (NSPDM) in Oakland, CA.

Memories that I have shared with many others, often to encourage junior officers to take a tour in Washington DC:

1. At that graduation, he discarded his notes, and said he was not going to use something his staff had prepared for him and decided to talk from his heart. He then preceded to challenge us to accept only the best efforts from ourselves and our staffs as we progressed through our careers! After that very inspirational speech, he then handed out our graduation certificates. General Edmiston was Commander of MTMC W at the time and in attendance. When General Edmonton shook my hand on the podium, he asked: "Aren't you glad you have received your rudder orders before arriving at General Bruen's command (like WOW can anyone live up to those standards)?" Then General Bruen shook my hand, gave me my graduation certificate and with a huge smile, profusely thanked me for accepting orders to his command and that he was excited to have me on his staff! What a great first impression on meeting one of the first flag officers of my career!

2. He was extremely supportive of every extracurricular project the junior officers presented to him, such as: officer vs enlisted softball & flag football, military vs civilian softball and a joint civilian/military softball team that played at Arlington Hall Station at noon! Not only did he say "yes" when we asked him to approve the activity, but he attended many of them!

3. A dining in was scheduled and his aide, Brian Geehan, suggested that a skit of the General's staff meeting would provide great entertainment, and that I, the small guy could play Neva, his secretary and he could play the General. General Bruen and General DeHaven were both in attendance. I used balloons for

breasts, dress and panty hose and a blond wig, which went well with my Navy regulation beard! The fun part was keeping the balloons in place without a bra, and snapping a whip to get the staffs attention for the General, claiming that the staff were not submitting their reports on time and any other crazy project the staff was slow in responding! I will never forget calling the Personal Property department the "Pots and Pans" department. When I looked to see the response of these two Generals, they were both laughing and re-assured me that my career had not just ended!

4. When he was selected for his third star, I asked him this crazy question: "Is there room on your shoulder for three stars"? His response provided that rare insight to a great man and leader: "My wife and I never thought we would be honored with such an important promotion and assignment"!

5. When the junior officer council provided punch and cake prior to his departure from MTMC, he challenged all the JO's to stay in his huge house in Germany vice the BOQ, if traveling through his base! His aide asked: "What about Tim (me), is he invited"? General laughed in response: "I thought about that before making the offer and knew he had orders to Hawaii and would not visit Germany".

Summary: I liked and respected this great man! He was "my" General, whenever I had a chance to introduce him to anyone! He was very focused and taught this young officer how to be passionate about a project and not at the briefer reporting less than good news! In many ways, he fashioned my leadership style that enabled me to serve the Navy for 30 years (active and reserve) and reach the O-6 level! His family has much to be proud of! Thank you General for the tremendous contribution you have made to this world, the joint services. your family and to me personally!

Tim Johnson

CAPT, SC, USN (Ret)

capt.tim.johnson@gmail.com

July 22, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ A great American and Soldier who demonstrated strong and fearless leadership, setting the bar high, with a simple requirement "CHECK - CHECK - CHECK". From Ft. Bragg to Germany he remained true to his principles. A pleasure and honor to serve with!!

July 21, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ John D. Bruen

Joyful Memory - July 21, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ The young officer and his Cherry Blossom Princess

July 21, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ I just want to thank everyone for their kind words and support to our family.

Michael

July 21, 2017 at 12:00 AM