



Stephen C. Belas

May 3, 1917 - April 15, 2009

Stephen C. Belas of Wethersfield, died peacefully at New Britain General Hospital yesterday after a short illness.

Mr. Belas was born in New Britain on May 3, 1917, the son of Charles and Helen Kerelejza Belas. He graduated from New Britain High School, received a degree in printing at E. C. Goodwin Technical School, and attended Hillyer College predecessor to the University of Hartford.

Like many of his generation, his early adult life was disrupted and his life greatly changed, by World War II. Shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Mr. Belas was accepted as an aviation cadet in the Army Air Corps. He graduated as a fighter pilot in January, 1943. In November, 1943, he was ordered to training at the Army Air Forces Technical School Engineering Officers School at Yale University. There, he developed what would be a life-long love of learning.

After graduation, he was ordered first to New Guinea, and later to the Philippines where he directed and regulated freight and passenger air traffic and personally opened up new stations as forward bases were made available. He witnessed the awful power of the atomic bomb, having opened the Allied airstrip at Hiroshima shortly after the event.

While on active duty, he reached the rank of captain. After the war, he remained in the U. S. Air Force Reserve, retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 1968. He also was an active member of the Ukrainian American Veterans. Upon returning home from the war, he married Margaret Czerepusko of New

Britain. They had two sons, Richard and Leonard, and soon moved to Newington. Richard now lives in Bryn Mawr, PA, with his wife, Judy, and Len now lives in Des Moines with his wife, Sally.

After nearly 34 years of marriage, Margaret passed away. Luckily, he found love again and married Dorothy Yawin Kotyk in 1981. Together, they built a new home in Wethersfield. With that marriage of nearly 28 years, he had the pleasure of getting to know a new son and daughter Darryl and Darlene, their spouses Linda Kotyk and Allen Bradley, and of having the opportunity to be a loving grandfather to their children, Kendall, Kendra, James and Jeffrey, as well as great-grandchildren Trevor, Taylor, Maren and Jenna.

In business, he was a founding partner in the Connecticut Photo-Engraving Company which helped advertising agencies and their clients between New York and Boston place ads in the Hartford and New Britain newspapers, as well as in magazines throughout the country. After selling that business, he found he liked people too much to stay at home and worked in sales at Home Depot until his 85th birthday.

Mr. Belas was active in St. Mary's Ukrainian Orthodox Church where he held many offices, including president. He received the church's distinguished service award in 2002.

He was an avid golfer at Indian Hill Country Club for many years and a voracious reader and patron of Lucy Robbins Welles Library in Newington. He loved traveling around the world with Dorothy. He loved walking around Newington's Indian Hill Golf Club with his golden retriever, Corky. But most of all, he liked everyone, and his presence usually brought much joy to those around him.

In addition to his wife and sons, he is survived by his sister Ann Sencio and nephew Brian Sencio of East Berlin, Brian's daughter Nicole, and his brother Michael and sister-in-law Helene Belas of Plantsville and their sons Robert of College Park, Maryland, and David of Southington.

Funeral services will be held Tuesday April 21, 2009 starting with a Divine Liturgy at 9 AM and funeral at 10 AM at St. Mary's Ukrainian Orthodox

Church, 54 Winter Street, New Britain. Burial will follow in the church cemetery. Calling hours are Monday 5 to 8 PM at Carlson Funeral Home, 45 Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051. A Parastas Service will be conducted Monday 7 PM at Carlson Funeral Home. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to St. Mary's Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Please share a memory or note of sympathy by clicking on "GUESTBOOK" at the bottom of this page.

Tribute Wall

GR

“ Steve came to our mother's wake, in December, and it was good to see him -- same old Steve, in great spirits, as ever. Reminded me of the days of the old engraving shop with Steve, Jack Miano, Doc Heagle, Reuben Enstam and my dad. I guess they're all gone now. My brother, sister and I extend our condolences to Steve's family.

Glenn Richter - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

PC

“ I had the sincere pleasure of knowing Steve when I first started in business. For more than 15 years he was a daily presence in our agency and he never failed to arrive without his smile and good humor. A man of genuine good will he demonstrated to me daily how a man is supposed to behave. Though I haven't seen him in years, I am sure I am a better person for having known him. My condolences to his family and friends.

Philip Clement - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

SM

“ I met Steve when I worked at an Elmwood ad agency in the early 1980's. He was one of our vendors. Truly one of the nicest people I've ever met. My condolences to the entire Belas family.

Sally Martin - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM