



Gunars J. Rankis

SEP 28, 1934 - NOV 13, 2024



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Gunars J. Rankis, 90, of Willowick, Ohio, passed away peacefully on November 13, 2024. Born on September 28, 1934, in Liepaja, Latvia, to the late Andrejs and Alise Leontine (nee Mikelsons) Rankis. His parents divorced, and later his father married Zenija (nee Auzenieks) Rankis.

Gunars spent his early years in Kaleti, Latvia on the family-owned farm with a 100-apple tree orchard. They fled their home country during World War II and found refuge in a displaced persons camp in Memmingen, Germany. There Gunars attended school and enjoyed participating in the Boy Scouts. The family emigrated to the United States, sponsored by a church and family with a farm in Antlers, Oklahoma. Later the Rankis family settled in Cleveland, Ohio.

He enlisted in the National Guard and served in the 107th Armored Cavalry C Troop. He was Honorably Discharged as an E-5 Sergeant from the National Guard of Ohio and as a Reserve of the Army of the United States. He was a Marksman who held credentials as a Certified Rifle Instructor who taught at the YMCA in Willoughby, Ohio.

Gunars was a Designer in CT Engineering at Picker International in Highland Heights, Ohio. In 1986 he received a letter commending his work on a project that was accepted by the Department of Defense. The Army, Navy, Air Force and DOD personnel were impressed with the unique imaging device. The company was sold and when he retired it was known as Marconi Medical Systems and then Philips Healthcare.

He was proud of his heritage and served on the Baltic Committee in support of the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian freedom from Soviet occupation. Gunars was dedicated to the church and active in the Latvian community lending a helping hand where needed – anything from sound systems to lighting for theater productions.

Gunars loved music, theater, fishing, camping, and travel. He enjoyed the Picker bowling league and even bowled a perfect 300 game. He especially enjoyed socializing with friends from church,



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the Daugavas Vanagi (Latvian Welfare Association), the Latvian Seniors, and the Picker Quarter Century Club. He served on the Latvian Seniors Planning Committee, and he enjoyed the bus trip excursions they took.

Gunars is survived by his devoted wife of 69 years, Astrida (nee Straumins) Rankis, and his beloved daughters, Sandra Nicholls, and Linda Andras. He will be greatly missed by his beloved kitty “Good Boy” Lacitis (Bear).

A service to celebrate Gunars' life will be held on Thursday, November 21, 2024, at 12 PM at Sunset Chapel, 6245 Columbia Rd, North Olmsted, Ohio 44070, with a graveside service to follow immediately after.

Gunars' legacy of love, dedication, and resilience will be cherished by all who knew him. In Lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the United Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cleveland, 1385 Andrews Avenue, Lakewood, OH 44107 or Daugavas Vanagi of Cleveland (Latvian Welfare Association of Cleveland).



Events

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Funeral Service

- Thursday**, November 21, 2024
- 12:00 PM ET
- Sunset Chapel**
6245 Columbia Road, North Olmsted OH 44070



Cemetery Details

- Sunset Cemetery**
6265 Columbia Road, North Olmsted OH 44070
- (440) 249-6256**





Tribute Wall

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Tracy And Laura sent a Fairest of All to the Rankis family.



November 18 at 2:39 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Gunars by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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