



Samuel "Al" Allen Cooper, Jr.

January 7, 1938 - November 25, 2022

Samuel Allen (Al) Cooper, Jr., age 84 of Bloomington, IN passed away peacefully on Friday, November 25, 2022, at IU Health Bloomington Hospice. Al was born on January 7, 1938, in Chicago, Illinois to Samuel Allen, Sr. and Mary Ann (Ivy) Cooper. Al and his family moved from Oak Park, Illinois in 1954 to Benton, Arkansas where he enrolled as a Senior in Benton Senior High School. Being from "up north," his teachers often teased him about being a "Yankee." Before graduating from high school, he joined the Arkansas Air National Guard. Al graduated from Benton Arkansas High School in 1955. Always interested in ham radio, he and his buddy, Sonny, received their Amateur Radio Licenses in 1955. In 1956, he attended and completed the course for radio communications from the Draughon School of Business. Also, in 1956, he received a First-Class FCC Radio Engineer License. With license in hand, he was hired as an engineer and radio announcer at KVSA in McGhee/Dermot, Arkansas. A variety of music was played at the station, but Al DJ'd as "Brother Al" on Sundays. While working at the radio station, he also attended college at Arkansas AM in Monticello. In 1962, he received a Bachelor of Business Administration degree.

After leaving KVSA, he worked for a short time for the Boy Scouts of America as a District Scout Executive in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Feeling that there was something better out there, Al pursued a commission as a Naval Aviation Officer Cadet in 1963 and reported to pre-flight training at Pensacola, Florida.

After completing the training, he was commissioned as an Ensign in the U.S. Navy. In 1964, he was designated as a Naval Flight Officer and reported to his squadron (VF-213) in San Diego, CA. In 1965, he was promoted to Lieutenant Junior Grade. In 1966 he reported to the Naval Aviation Schools Command in Pensacola, Florida, where he taught classes in Aerodynamics. In 1966, he reported to the USS Kitty Hawk headed for Vietnam. While aboard the Kitty Hawk, Al was received the designation of "Double Centurion" in the F-4 fighter jet. He also was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V" for valor in the rescue of a USAF airman 20 miles northwest of Dung Hoi in North Vietnam.

In 1966 he reported to the Naval Aviation Schools Command at NATC Lakehurst, NJ for Catapult and Arresting Gear Officer School. In 1967, he was promoted to Lieutenant. From there, he reported to the USS Coral Sea as the Catapult & Arresting Gear Officer. In 1972, he was promoted to Lieutenant Commander. From 1972-1975 he served with his squadron in San Diego, CA. Later in 1975, he reported to Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT) in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii where he met his wife-to-be, Jann. While in Hawaii, he took up an interest in running. In 1978 he competed and finished the Honolulu Marathon.

Al's next duty station was an unaccompanied tour at NAF Midway Island, where he served as Executive Officer from 1980-1981. From there, Al moved his family to Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Washington where he served as the station's Safety Officer. During his time at NAS Whidbey, Al received a Master of Science degree in Human Resource Management and Development from Chapman College. Al retired from the Navy in 1984 as a Lieutenant Commander.

Upon retiring, Al was hired as Director of the Armed Forces YMCA in Oak Harbor, WA. Soon after, he received a call from a colleague about an

instructor opening at Indiana University's Hazard Control Program. They welcomed him and his experience with open arms and in 1988 he and his family moved to Bloomington, Indiana. When the IU program closed, he went to work at NAS Crane in the Safety Office. During this time, he received a second Master of Science degree in Applied Health Science. He was later promoted to the position of NAS Crane Station Safety Director. Al retired from Crane/Civil Service in 2005. Just when he was settling down to a life of leisure, he was recruited by Circle Safety as a contract OSH Specialist for the Transportation Security Administration's North Central Region where he worked for another 2 ½ years.

Al had many hobbies and interests over the years. As an amateur radio enthusiast most of his life, he contacted and received transmissions from fellow ham radio operators all over the world. He was also a member of Toastmasters International and achieved the designation of "Distinguished Toastmaster" in 1995. Al later became a member of Monroe Masonic Lodge #22 and was raised to Master Mason in 2010.

He is survived by his wife of 44 years, Janet (Razor) Cooper; children Mark (Imelda) Cooper, Corinne (Aaron) Herring, Andrea (Aaron) Gushiken, Kristin (Paul) Smith; eighteen grandchildren; and 4 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents Al, Sr. and Mary Ann (Ivy) Cooper.

Visitation will be held on Saturday, December 17, 2022 at Allen Funeral Home and Crematory, 4155 South Old State Road 37; Bloomington, IN 47401 from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm. Services will begin at 1:00 pm.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 17. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory
4155 S. Old State Road 37
Bloomington, IN 47401
(812) 824-5905
<http://www.allencares.com>

Service

DEC 17. 1:00 PM (ET)

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory
4155 S. Old State Road 37
Bloomington, IN 47401
(812) 824-5905
<http://www.allencares.com>

Tribute Wall



“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



Allen Funeral Home and Crematory - December 05, 2022 at 01:22 PM