



Omer Vance Austin

April 10, 1929 – May 10, 2024

Omer Vance Austin of Crystal River, FL passed away peacefully in his recliner at home during his afternoon nap on May 10, 2024, one month after his 95th birthday. He was affectionately known as ‘Buster’ when growing up and later as ‘Doc’ by Pennsylvania friends, where he lived for over 60 years, and ultimately as ‘Vance’ by his Florida friends his last 30 years or so. He never cared for the name Omer. Vance was born in Smithfield, PA to Laurence Shepard Austin and Mary Vance on April 10, 1929. He married his Georges Township High School sweetheart, Dorla Jean Firestone, on May 19th, 1951. After graduating with an Optometry degree from the Illinois College of Optometry Vance served in the US Army during the Korean War years. It was foxhole exercises during the war where his hearing was severely impaired by repeated firing of automatic weapons, experienced without hearing protection requirements that are enforced today. While stationed in Texas, he provided optometric services to both Army and Air Force personnel.

Upon his honorable discharge from the US Army in 1955, Vance and Dorla moved to Levittown, PA where he worked as a road and highway Construction Manager during the day around most of the State of New Jersey, while performing eye exams and corrective lenses for patients in the evenings at his home office in Pennsylvania.

Vance was preceded in death by both of his parents, his older sister, Pearl Louise Hyland, and a son who did not survive the trauma of childbirth, Jeffrey Vance Austin.

Vance is survived by his wife of 73 years Dorla, his older brother James Robert Austin, two children, Terry Vance Austin (Eileen) and Lynne Anne Krotz, four grandchildren, Kristine Ann Ionescu (George), Douglas George Hetzel (Diana), Rebecca Lynne Austin (Dan), Andrew Vance Austin (Jennifer), five Great-Grandchildren, Gavin Douglas Hetzel (Julia), Conner Joseph Ionescu, Shawn Robert Ionescu, Ryan George Ionescu, Trent Michael-Vance Austin, and one Great-Great-Grandchild, Rhea Jane Hetzel.

In addition to working two diverse careers to support his family, Vance was quite the sportsman excelling in both bowling and golf and was an avid Pittsburgh Steeler fan. His true passion was golf which he continued playing well into his 90’s. He was an active weekend member of Fairless Hills GC during his working years in Pennsylvania and a very active daily member of the Plantation Inn Resort and GC during his retirement years in Crystal River, FL, where even with his lifetime hearing



disability he was rather famous among his buddies for being able to hear noises and step back from distractions that others failed to perceive.

Vance was never happier than being with his family though, cherishing every moment whether at home or a ball field or on a golf course. Family and friends are requested to take a moment to reflect on their relationship with Vance and thank the Lord for the good memories that they recall. He was a perfectionist, a man of integrity, sincere honesty, and had a strong private faith in God. The Lord will receive him with open arms, re-uniting him with many of his family and friends that passed on before him and those to follow.

Brown Funeral Home and Crematory, Lecanto, Florida in charge of arrangements.