

Frank Leslie Bessenger

Commander Frank L. Bessenger Jr., USN (Ret.), of Dade City, FL, passed away on Saturday, 7 October 2017. He was 78 years old.

Frank was born on 5 December 1938 in Dade City, the son of Leslie and Pearl Bessenger. He graduated from Pasco High School in 1956 and attended the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD, graduating in the Class of 1960.

As an active duty naval officer, Frank served 20 years with shipboard sea and shore assignments. He served three years as an advisor to the Iranian Navy in Tehran, Iran (1969-1972). His next assignment involved four years travel to Saudi Arabia from Washington, DC, on the OpNav project coordination effort for the FMS Saudi Naval Expansion Program. His last tour of duty included InSurv contract acceptance trials for new construction ships and submarines and underway maintenance inspections.

After retiring from the Navy as a commander in 1980, Frank worked as a program manager for two flight simulation companies, Reflectone Simulation, Inc. in Tampa, FL, and Redifusion Simulation UK in Tulsa, OK. He embarked on a second career with Lockheed Martin until his retirement in 2003.

He was a member of St. Mary's Episcopal Church (Dade City, FL), MOAA and the Naval Academy Alumni Association.

Frank is survived by his loving wife of 56 years, Melinda Wynn Bessenger; daughter, Mary Wynn Seiter (and her husband, Joe, and their children T.J., Andrew, Jack and Matt); and two sons, Les Bessenger III (and his children, Les IV and Sarah) and Reid Bessenger (and his wife, Michele, and their children, Nate, Brittany, Sarah, Sam and Spencer). He was predeceased by his father, Leslie; mother, Pearl; sister, Mary Reid; grandsons, Samuel Bessenger and Ryan Seiter; and brother-in-law, Bill Osterhoudt.

November-December 2017 Shipmate