

## William J. Champion III



William John Champion III, 89, of Newport passed away peacefully on Monday May 28, 2018, at his home surrounded by his loving family. He was born on February 21, 1929 to State Representative William Champion Jr and his wife Margaret (Homer). He was the oldest of six siblings.

He graduated from De La Salle Academy in 1947 where he was a four-sport varsity letterman.

After he graduated, Bill was an apprentice plumber for Wheaty Underwood. While working as an apprentice he also joined the US Army and served during the Korean War. While enlisted he continued to work as a plumber and after his service, earned his Master Plumbers license. Bill perfected his craft as a plumber and worked in Newport his entire life. He did work for Senator Pell, Hugh Auchincloss, the Whitehouse's, Castle Hill, Cluny School, the City of Newport as well as countless friends and family throughout Newport County. He married his high school sweetheart, Cecilia Gouveia in 1958. They had two children, Therese Marie and William John IV.

Bill was a dedicated Catholic and a parishioner of St Augustin's Church. He was a lifelong member of the Knights of Columbus and held many positions including Grand Knight and State District Deputy of RI. Bill was also a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians earning Division Life Membership. Bill loved the game of baseball and volunteered countless years of his life to Fifth Ward Little League. His business, Champion Plumbing & Heating, sponsored a team for 10 years winning numerous FWLL championships. After his coaching days, Bill served as president of the league and was also the official scorer and public-address announcer until 2005. An award for sportsmanship was established in his honor. Bill perfected the "Irish goodbye" and earned the nickname Houdini for his countless performances of the act. He was a loving father, a caring brother, a fun grandfather, an outstanding great-grandfather and a model citizen who will be dearly missed. He was preceded in death by his wife Cecilia Champion.

He is survived by his children Terrie Champion-Welford and Billy Champion of Newport. His grandchildren, Kori Lyman-Champion, Patrick Welford, Meaghan McCarthy and her husband Tim, all of Newport, Erin Champion & William John Champion V of Portsmouth. His four great-grandchildren Coy Francis Jr, Shea Francis, Phoebe McCarthy & Eleanor McCarthy. He is survived by his brothers, Paul Champion of Port St. Lucie, Fl, Donald Champion and his wife Barbara of Middletown, Nick Champion and his wife Linda of Baton Rouge, LA. His sisters Patricia Moniz and Sheila Maxwell of Newport. as well as countless nieces & nephews.

Visitation will be on Friday, June 1, 2018 from 4-7 pm at the O'Neill-Hayes Funeral Home, 465 Spring St, Newport. A Mass of Christian burial will be held Saturday June 2, 2018 at 10 am in St Augustin's Church, Carroll Avenue, Newport. Burial will follow at St. Columba Cemetery, 465 Brown's Lane, Middletown.

The family would like to thank Visiting Nurse Home & Hospice, Ocean State Nursing, Asilean Ramsey, Shelley Warren, Sr Josephine St. Ledger, Fr. Kris & Fr. Frank.