

Leonard T. Murphy



Leonard T. Murphy, 81 of Newport passed away Thursday, January 25, 2018. Born in Newport, RI to Louis S. and Irene (Burns) Murphy. Raised across the street from Morton Park in Newport's Fifth Ward, this proud native Newporter lived a happy life with his siblings Thomas, Irene, Louie and Robert Murphy. Lenny's priorities in his eighty-one years of joyful living were always faith, family, friends, country, Newport and his Irish heritage. A man of intelligence and sharp wit, he was a graduate of St Augustin's, De LaSalle Academy and College of the Holy Cross. After almost five years in the United States Army Intelligence and Military Police, he set forth on a career path as a dedicated educator in the Newport Public Schools for twenty-eight years where he enjoyed the students and colleagues.

Community minded, he was a Newport City Councilman, member of the Newport Historical Society, Preservation Society, Elks, Knights of Columbus, FOPA, Vasco de Gama, Hibernians, Hillside Charitable Trust and Hazard's Beach. He embraced his Irish heritage and undertook the lengthy complicated task of obtaining dual citizenship by becoming an Irish citizen and holder of an Irish passport through his Irish immigrant grandmother Mary Smith Burns. He was a devoted communicant of St Augustin's Roman Catholic Church, the church of his forebears. Lenny passed from this earth in his ancestral home that his grandfather, Charles Burns, had built in the turn of the century and where his mother and the Burns girls grew up. Lenny was a story teller, laughed often, and shared memories of Newport days, both people and places of times gone by from the Big Houses on Bellevue Avenue to the Ocean Drive and every little street in town and their inhabitants. His teenage years of delivering groceries from family owned TJ Murphy Market to the Avenue back doors gave him a wealth of local knowledge.

His wife of 35 years Christine McCormick Murphy will miss the full life she shared with Lenny. He was a favorite of scores of nieces and nephews from the large Murphy family. His canine buddies Miss McCormick and Miss Nellie Burns Murphy delighted him. His strong will to live prevailed over his increasingly weak body for

a long time. He loved life. Sadly, he passed from the life he loved. Remember him kindly. “ Beat the drums slowly and play the fifes lowly” 18th century Irish Ballad.

Viewing was held at the O’Neill-Hayes Funeral Home, 465 Spring Street, Newport on Sunday, January 28, 2018. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Augustin’s Church, Carroll Avenue on Monday, January 29, 2018 at 10 am. Burial followed at St Columba Cemetery, 465 Brown’s Lane, Middletown, RI. Donations may be made to The Hillside Charitable Trust, 86 Bayview Park, Middletown, RI 02842.