



James M. Devine

June 24, 2025

In Loving Memory of James M. Devine

McAllen, Texas

February 1925 – June 24, 2025

James M. Devine, beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and proud U.S. Navy veteran of World War II, passed away peacefully on June 24, 2025, surrounded by family. He was 100 years old.

Jim's long and remarkable life began in Kirkwood, Missouri. By the time he was a young teenager, Jim was already hard at work. He delivered newspapers, worked in a leather factory, and eventually became a Western Union messenger. His job required him to deliver some of the most devastating news of the era—telegrams informing mothers that their sons had died in the war or notifying families of soldiers missing in action. Those deliveries left a permanent mark on him.

When he saw Jimmy Stewart's stirring portrayal of Navy life in *Navy Blue and Gold*, something clicked. Jim wanted to serve, to see the world, and to make a difference. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, at 17, he walked into the St. Louis recruiting office only to be told he was too young and needed a parent's consent. When his mother refused, Jim approached his grandmother who signed consent.

Jim joined the Navy with dreams of submarines, but at 6'2", he was too tall.

He was assigned as a Gunner's Mate and deployed to the Pacific Theater.

Jim served for four years during World War II, stationed on islands across the

Pacific and riding aboard Merchant Marine transport ships, standing armed watch as convoys ferried essential supplies through dangerous waters, and guarding vital supply routes to island outposts like New Guinea.

At 21, Jim returned to Kirkwood. The war was over, but his story was far from finished. At his brother's wedding in St. Louis, where he served as best man, he met the bride's cousin, Josephine. They were inseparable from the start. She came from a large, loving farming family in Waterloo, Illinois, and Jim, who had longed for such connection his entire life, stepped into it with open arms.

They married in 1949 and moved to McAllen, Texas in 1952, where they raised three children. Jim became a master mechanic at the Boggus Ford dealership at age 27 and retired there at 70. Notably, racing legend Carroll Shelby saw work Jim had done for a mutual customer, and praised his work, saying the work he had done was some of the best work he'd ever seen and offered to hire him. Jim never boasted—he simply nodded, smiled, and got back to work.

Jim and Josephine shared 65 years of extraordinary marriage. In her final decade, as she battled Alzheimer's, Jim cared for her himself. Though many of her memories faded, one remained crystal clear—Jim. He was always her comfort, her protector, her safe place.

Jim lived independently in his home up to his 100th birthday, when he finally consented to living with his son and daughter-in-law in Leander, TX. They were thrilled to have him live with them and cherished the time they had. Unfortunately, he finally succumbed from symptoms of his long bout with COPD to join his beloved Josephine.

His family will remember his sense of humor, his laughter, fishing at South Padre Island and Falcon Lake, his coaching pony league baseball, camping with Boy Scouts, his cheering at track meets, many BBQs and family dinners, trips to the farm in Illinois, his lovely singing voice and the yearly voicemails singing happy birthday to his children, remembering every birthday with cards and phone calls, and in later years, his love of the Price is Right and Wheel of

Fortune, two-stepping to the dinner table while his family freaked out and made sure he didn't fall while he laughed at our silliness, but mostly – just his love for us and the inspiring love he had for his lovely wife, and their true example of what marriage should be – friendship, devotion, respect, and true love.

Jim is survived by his sons Mike Devine (Nancy), Mitch Devine (Elizabeth), and daughter Debbie Valdes (Lee), five grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren, each a testament to the life and love he created. He is preceded in death by his beloved wife, his father, his mother, his three brothers, and at 100 years old, many friends and family.

Rosary will be held at Kreidler Funeral Home on July 6, 2025, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Funeral will take place at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church on July 7, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. He will be buried at Tipton, Illinois, with his wife.

In lieu of flowers, the family invites donations in his memory to Meals on Wheels and Alzheimer's research and care organizations.

Previous Events

Visitation and Rosary

JUL 6. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Kreidler Funeral Home, Inc.

314 N 10th St.

McAllen, TX 78501

(956) 686-0234

kreidler@sbcglobal.net

<http://www.kreidlerfuneralhome.com/index.html>

Funeral Service

JUL 7. 10:00 AM (CT)

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church