



## Francis E. King

October 10, 2021

Francis E. King, Jr. (Fran), 96 of West Hartford passed away Sunday October 10th peacefully at home with his beloved wife Claire (Shanahan) at his side having spent his last day(s) doing what was most important to him, spending time with family at a celebration, caring for his lawn, and rooting the Boston Red Sox to victory.

Born March 18, 1925 in Dorchester, MA to Francis and Melinda (Crowley) King and older brother of the late John and Donald King. He graduated from Boston English High School in 1942. In May 1943 he enlisted in the Army Air Corps to serve in the 401st Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force in England. As a Tail Gunner aboard the B-17 "Hell's Angels Out of Chute 13" he and his crew flew 35 Combat Missions over Western Europe during WWII. For his service to the French Republic in the liberation of France, he was awarded in 2019 membership in the Legion of Honor, that country's highest honor, having participated in campaigns in Normandy, Southern France, Northern France and the Rhine.

At the conclusion of the War, Fran returned to the Boston area and attended Boston University under the GI bill graduating with a degree in Business Administration in 1949. He then began a long career in the insurance industry, retiring from The Hartford in 1988 and then began a second career in residential real estate with Prudential Realty until 2005.

Fran met his wife Claire in Boston, married in 1956, moved to West Hartford in 1967 where together they raised six children. During retirement they enjoyed

spending time in Florida, traveling and time with their children and grandchildren.

Fran's volunteer activities included serving on the HARC Board, and coaching Special Olympians. He was a member of the Old Guard and West Hartford Squires. He enjoyed playing tennis until the age of 90 and working in the yard until his final day. He also enjoyed rooting for the Boston Red Sox, New England Patriots and attending UCONN Basketball games.

Fran leaves behind his beloved wife of 65 years Claire and his children Frank (Debra), Michael, Stephen, Karen (Dana Pound), Diane, Melinda Belsham (Eric). He was a loving grandfather to Diana, Frank, Kristina, Melissa, Elizabeth, Samantha, Marisa, Alex and Andrew.

A funeral Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11:00am on Friday October 15th at The Church of St. Peter Claver 47 Pleasant St, West Hartford CT, followed by a burial with full military honors at Fairview Cemetery. There will be no calling hours. Directions and online expressions of sympathy may be made at [www.molloyfuneralhome.com](http://www.molloyfuneralhome.com)

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Fran's memory to Special Olympics West Hartford PO Box 27131 West Hartford CT 06127 (Checks made payable to SOWH) or HARC 900 Asylum Ave, Hartford CT 06105 [www.harc-ct.org/donatenow](http://www.harc-ct.org/donatenow)

# Cemetery Details

## Fairview Cemetery

200 Whitman Ave.  
West Hartford, CT

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

OCT **15**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Church of St. Peter Claver  
47 Pleasant St.  
West Hartford, CT

# Tribute Wall

TR

“ *Our condolences to Fran's wife and family! My wife and I worked with Fran at The Hartford for many years. He was an honorable manager and leader and a pleasure to work for during those years. Some years later I learned he was a neighbor to my childhood doctor, Dr. Gould and also a neighbor to my uncle, William Kelly, who was also in the insurance business. High moral character was one of Fran's traits. Men as he, come few and far in-between in our society. After we all retired from the insurance business, we recall visiting with him at our Annual Outings, year after year, at High Meadow in Granby. We will truly miss Fran King and his friendship!*

*Best Personal Regards,*

*Tom & Rita Rickis*

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**Thomas Rickis** - October 14, 2021 at 10:30 PM

LK

“ *I had the pleasure of knowing Fran King because we both volunteered on the HARC Board. I had no idea that he received the Legion of Honor. But I do remember his comment about driving thru Hartford for our meetings, the kamikaze express he referenced. And I do remember talking about tennis, which certainly was one of his many passions. He will be greatly missed.*

*Sincerely,*

*Lynn Joseloff Kaufman*

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**lynn Joseloff Kaufman** - October 13, 2021 at 12:11 PM

JC

*I am so sorry to hear about Fran who will be remembered & missed by those of us in the 401st Bombardment Group Association. I always enjoyed visiting with Fran and his dear wife Claire at reunions which they so often attended.*

*Blessings to Fran's wonderful family; what a legacy your husband, father & grandfather has left for all of you!!*

*Jeannie Campbell*

*(Daughter of Paul Campbell, pilot, 615th & Marietta Campbell)*

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**Jeannie Campbell** - October 16, 2021 at 01:01 AM