



## Dennis L. Bales Jr.

November 21, 1923 - May 8, 2020

We lost another of the “Greatest Generation” on May 8, 2020. Dennis L. Bales, Jr was born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on November 21, 1923 to Dennis L Bales and Ruth C. Bales. He lived his youth during the depression from 1930 through the Dust Bowl. He recalls both vividly especially nothing but dust in the air for 10 years. He dropped out of high school after his sophomore year to join the US Army in August of 1941. He was stationed in Hawaii when the Japanese bombing began on December 7, 1941. He was already a sergeant by that time and with the draft after the declaration of war all his troops reporting to him were older than he. He fought the war on the islands of the south Pacific and was wounded on Makin Island on November 23, 1943. Here is how he described it: “It happened just after my 20th birthday, November 23, 1943. It was a wound caused by two pieces of either mortar shell or hand grenade. In those days we had a Medic Aid Man assigned to each Battery. Our guy who was a good guy, I can’t remember his name took out the fragments on my left arm. He also applied some stitches. He did it without any anesthetic which was the worst part of the whole deal. He wrapped it with sulphur powder, but it got infected anyway. Every cut of any kind got infected on those islands in that climate. I never missed one minute of work because of it. The night it happened 25 great guys in my platoon lost their life, which made this thing completely forgettable. I never gave this a thought until I was being examined at the Discharge Center in Ft Leavenworth, Kansas on August 25, 1945. He asked about the ugly scars and I told him the story.”

When he was discharged after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, he returned to Roosevelt High School to finish his terms. He completed two years of schooling in one year. He lived at the YMCA and sold shoes at Women’s Clothing Store downtown where he learned much from a great boss. After graduation he attended the University of Oklahoma and majored in Business and played basketball and baseball.

He married Billie Ruth Hargrove in 1946 while still in school and lived in the married students housing which was cheap but adequate. Upon graduation in 1952 he was recruited by the Travelers Insurance Company and worked for them for 39 years. He was promoted from Oklahoma City after six years, to Dallas for three years, to Riverside CA for

three years and finally to Los Angeles in 1962 when he moved to Palos Verdes Estates. He was Regional Sales Manager for the western states. His next promotion was as VP to the Home office in Hartford, Conn. But he turned that position down telling his boss after finding Palos Verdes, "I'm not going anywhere. This is where I want to raise my family." He raised three children and while working such a demanding job was able to coach their Little League, Pony League, Babe Ruth baseball teams and started and ran the Palos Verdes Youth Basketball League as President and coach.

He and Billie enjoyed membership in Palos Verdes Golf Club since 1967.

He, in recent years attended Rolling Hills Covenant Church.

He is survived by his son Dennis L Bales III (Judy), his daughter Diana Pfeil (Mark). And his 7 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren, his brother Jerry Bales in Dallas, Texas and his sister Denny Hladik in Hennessey, Oklahoma. He was predeceased by his parents and his youngest son, Daniel L. Bales (Christy).

Family and friends of Dennis are invited to share their favorite photos, video memories and heart felt messages on his Tribute page on the Green Hills Mortuary Website.

# Cemetery

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## **Green Hills Memorial Park**

27501 S. Western Ave.

Rancho Palos Verdes, CA, 90275

# Comments

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“ 4 files added to the album Dennis Bales Jr



**Dennis L Bales III** - May 13, 2020 at 01:36 PM