



Deno John Paoli

January 30, 1926 - January 8, 2022

Deno Paoli Obituary

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Deno Paoli, beloved big brother, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, passed away suddenly and peacefully on Saturday, January 8, 2022, in Roseville, California. He was a spry and active 95-year-old prior to contracting Covid-19.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Paul and Marie Paoli; wife, Mary Ellen; companion, Becky Swanson; niece, Janet Hughes; and brother-in-law, Val Roberti.

Deno is survived by his sister, Laura Roberti; daughter, Bette Clower (Tom); nieces: Karen Peterson and Linda Bacigalupi; grandchildren: Keith Paulsen (Patty), Heidi Layne (Denny), Heather Paulsen, and Hillary Graves (Bobby); great-grandchildren: Nick, Tyler (Ashley), Alexis, Kyle, Zach (Marissa), Kiely, Luke, Drake, and Ella; bonus-daughter, Aimee Swanson; and many friends and coworkers whom he cherished.

Deno was born at Sutter Hospital (28th & L Street, Sacramento) and grew up

on 49th Street, known as Little Italy. As a first-generation American, he spoke only Italian until entering kindergarten. He was blessed with loving parents, and a sweet little sister. His mother, Marie, showered the family with her love and authentic Italian cooking. Small in stature, but tall in confidence and ingenuity, he had many fun stories to tell like when he was rejected by the local little league baseball team, he created his own team, found sponsors, and went on to win the championship; or as a young teenager, was recruited by families in the neighborhood to help complete legal and immigration paperwork.

Prior to his 18th birthday, he enlisted in the Navy was stationed in the Aleutian Islands from 1944 to 1946. He was very proud of his time in the service and the sacrifices made by his generation. As an older man, he was often invited to speak to different community groups about WWII and the young men who served and died to defend democracy.

After the war he attended Sacramento City College, earning a Business Administration degree, and McGeorge Law School while working for the State of California. It was at work, he met and married Mary Ellen Walters and became stepfather to Bette, whom he later adopted as his own.

Deno next became successful in real estate, in the U.S. and abroad, with land deals in Brazil and Australia, as well as California; eventually becoming the President of the Sacramento Board of Realtors. After the market in Sacramento declined, he took his deal-making savvy to Southern California and produced over a dozen films, the most notable, a western starring Glenn Ford called Santee (1973), which can still be seen on late-night TV. His real estate and movie work took him all over the world and he loved it.

After living in Marina Del Ray for many years, he next moved to Oakland, California, and opened The Clambucket restaurant (1984). It became a

neighborhood favorite because of the delicious Bay Area/Italian cuisine and the warm welcome and fun stories provided by Deno and his partner/companion, Becky Swanson. The Clambucket became a meeting place for first responders and surviving family members in October of 1989 when the Loma Prieta earthquake devastated the area and the highway, just blocks away, collapsed. The restaurant sustained for another 5 years, but the traffic patterns were blocked, and the customers drifted away.

Ever the entrepreneur, Deno tried other businesses, including a bowling alley. He kept his real estate license active and always continued to learn. He was an avid reader and loved history.

His 6th career change was to work for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, traveling to disaster areas all over the country. He was never afraid of hard work or uncomfortable accommodations, although he did reminisce at times how much he would have liked to live his life in a swanky hotel with room and laundry service.

Next, yes there was a next. He went to work as a security officer, first at Verizon headquarters, then for the Department of Justice in downtown Sacramento. As everywhere, he made wonderful friends at work who loved his stories, and him.

Deno's heart and door were always open to those in need. Many times, throughout his life, he dropped everything and gave all he could to assist family members or other young people who needed

a helping hand.

What made the man was not the U.S. Presidents he met, the world dignitaries

he dined with, the movies he made, the jockeys, the actors, or athletes he could call his friends – even though he thrived on the memories of those experiences and relationships – his legacy is his kindness and generosity to all, and his love for his family.

Following his wishes, he will be cremated. As a military veteran, he will be honored and interred at Sacramento Valley National Cemetery in Dixon, California, on Friday, May 6, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.

Sacramento Valley National Cemetery

5810 Midway Road, Dixon, California 95620

Reception begins at 3:30 pm at Club Pheasant (2525 Jefferson Blvd, West Sacramento, CA 95691).

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Tribute Wall



“ *It has been a great pleasure to have known Deno. We worked for many years at the SBA Disaster Assistance with Deno and developed a dear friendship. He was probably the best storyteller and kept all concerned enthralled for hours, We all dearly loved him and he will be greatly missed. Rest in peace sweet Deno. John and Louise Leon*

Louise Leon - January 31, 2022 at 12:22 PM