



Philippine K. Benners

APR 1, 1923 - FEB 26, 2025



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Philippine K. Benners (Minnie), of Tallahassee passed away February 26, 2025. Minnie was preceded in death by her husband, John S. Benners. She is survived by sons, M. Paul Benners (Barb) of Lilburn, Ga and William (Bill) S. Benners (Beth) of Lloyd, Fl.

Minnie was born in Mainz, Germany in 1923 where she spent most of her youth. When Minnie's formal education was completed, she apprenticed for two years to become a secretary. Once Minnie completed her apprentice period, she worked for the German Government in a workman's compensation department in Darmstadt, Germany. Later, Minnie went to work as a secretary for a German aeronautical dynamics engineer. During WWII, Minnie's engineer worked on various German war projects, including the V-1 and V-2 rocket bombs. During her war-time employment Minnie also met Werner von Braun and other German rocket scientists.

On the night of September 11th, 1944 and the early morning of the 12th, Minnie's family home in Darmstadt was destroyed during a large-scale British Lancaster incendiary fire-bombing of the city. Although the actual bombing initially spared Minnie's home, the firestorm caused by the incendiary bombs eventually spread and destroyed her home. Minnie and her family escaped physically unscathed; however, the fire destroyed all their clothing and possessions.

For the remainder of the war, Minnie's employer constantly changed locations to evade attack by the Allied armies. Ultimately, the owner of the company gathered all his employees and explained that the company was ceasing operations and that all the employees should try to make it home. The owner further advised the employees to go to the American, British, and Canadian lines if need be; but, not to go in the direction of the advancing Russians. Eventually Minnie made her way a great distance over several days and was able to get back to Darmstadt.

After the war, Minnie went to work as a clerk typist for the U.S. Army's Quartermaster School in Darmstadt. There, Minnie met Sgt. John S. Benners, whom she married in 1950.



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In 1951, Minnie, John, and infant Paul moved to Petersburg, VA (Fort Lee). Bill was born there in 1952. The family followed John during assignments in Ft. Benning, GA; Kitzingen, West Germany; and finally, to Ft. Devens, MA. John retired from the Army in 1962 whereupon the family moved to Miami, Fl., where all living members of John's family resided.

Minnie worked for many years in the Personnel Department of Miami-Dade Junior College's South Campus in Kendall.

Around 1976 Minnie and John moved to Sebring, Fl. John passed away in 1993.

Minnie enjoyed working in her yard and playing duplicate bridge at the Sebring Bridge Club, where she was a member. Minnie moved to Tallahassee in early 2020.

Minnie will be interred at the Tallahassee National Cemetery with her late husband, John. No public services will be held. Donations in Minnie's memory may be made to Big Bend Hospice, 1723 Mahan Blvd., Tallahassee, Florida 32308.



Memories only last if you share them

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