

# OBITUARIES

ON THE EVENING OF MARCH 2, 2013, in the West Lebanon living room where he watched thousands of Red Sox games, George William Gove, 87, died peacefully, surrounded by his family and protected by his wonderful dog Quint. George finally found something that he just couldn't fix, and that was beating pancreatic cancer. During his nine month battle with this awful disease, George became known in the Upper Valley as the "Pumpkin Man," as he grew a giant pumpkin weighing 181 pounds.

George was born on July 20, 1925 in his family home of Wilnot, the son of Clarence Garfield and Martha (Dean) Gove. He graduated from Andover High School in 1948. He was a very proud World War II veteran and served in the Army from October 1943 until April 1946. He was the member of Company C 244th Engineers-B and was a Private First Class.



While in World War II, his service

took him to France and Germany, where he was most proud of his work building bridges and running a rest station for the infantry to come and participate in recreation activities.

On February 3, 1952, he married the love of his life, Jean Brewster Gove. They made their home in West Lebanon for 59 years. Their marriage was one that spanned 61 years and produced six children: Brewster G., Andrew R., Anthony R., James E., Tina M., and Trudy J.

George worked as an auto mechanic for 13 years before starting his 30-year career, from 1960 to 1990, at Granite State Electric, where he was a hydroelectric power plant operator for 10 years and a meter reader for 20 years.

He was well known by his customers in Walpole and Alsted, and when he retired they showered him with gifts of food and special mementos for the time he spent visiting with all of them.

In 1969, George was the person who shut down the electric power plant on the final day of operation, which is now the Powerhouse Mall in West Lebanon.

George retired in August of 1990 and became the busiest man in West Lebanon for the next 23 years. He worked part-time for his son's business, JEG Services and Sons in West Leba-

non for several years, and his days were full of all of his many hobbies and interests. He was a man of 87 years old, doing more work every day than most 40-year-olds completed.

George enjoyed taking his family camping in White Lake State Park in Ossipee every summer for two weeks. While at White Lake, he and his fishing buddy, Bob Miliano, spent countless hours pulling out trout from their favorite fishing spot on the lake.

George loved golfing, especially on Tuesday mornings with his Senior Golfing League at Carter Country Club in Lebanon. He also enjoyed raising chickens in his award-winning backyard chicken coop that he built and remodeled several times.

He became an expert biscuit maker and insisted on making 63 dozen biscuits for a church supper at West Lebanon Congregational Church, and his recipe was not shared until just recently with his close family. George also enjoyed making jams, jellies, and pickles from the fruit trees, raspberry and blueberry bushes, and garden that he tended on his property in West Lebanon.

During the Red Sox baseball season, George could be found sitting in his favorite recliner, dressed in his Red Sox jacket, cheering on his beloved team. He was such an adamant fan that his family honored him at a Red Sox-themed 80th birthday party where the 100+ guests all dressed in Red Sox attire, regardless of their team preference. The only Yankee item that was found was the hat on the pig roasting on the fire pit.

George loved playing cribbage and would play anyone who was willing to take on the challenge.

During George's nine-month battle with pancreatic cancer, he became best known as "The Pumpkin Man," as he raised a 181-pound pumpkin and brought it to Goffstown in October for the annual pumpkin festival. His journey with his pumpkin was described in an article entitled Pumpkin Therapy and was featured in several publica-

tions, including the Valley News in November 2012.

George was a life member of the Lebanon Elks No. 2099, the West Lebanon Fire Department for 20 years, and the Senior Golfing League at Carter Country Club in Lebanon. He also was a member of the West Lebanon Congregational Church, where he served on the deaconate board for many years.

He was a 2001 Charter Member of the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC. George was an active member of the Lebanon American Legion Post #22, and he served as their Chaplin and also participated very proudly as an Honor Guard, playing his bugle at many funerals for fellow veterans.

During his 23-year retirement, George and his wife Jean enjoyed traveling on bus trips all over the United States. A cherished trip was when they went to the dedication of the World War II monument in Washington, DC in 2004. They also enjoyed a 50th anniversary trip to Hawaii given to them by their five children.

On Thursday mornings for the past 20 years, George was a member of the "Breakfast Group" that met at several Upper Valley restaurants. This group of friends became very special to George and were of great support during his fight with cancer.

George is survived by his wife of 61 years, Jean Brewster Gove, and their children Brewster G. Gove of Grafton, Anthony R. Gove, Sr. and his wife Melissa of White River Junction, Vermont, Jim Gove and his wife Dianne of Evans, Georgia, Tina Gove Kebalka and her husband Peter of Lebanon, Trudy Gove and her boyfriend Harry Lewis of Charleston, South Carolina; 12 grandchildren: Leticia N. Gove, Anthony R. Gove, Jr., Britland J. Gove, Taylor J. Gove, Reid L. Gove, Sydney T. Gove, Mackenzie L. Gove, Andrew T. Kebalka, Meghan J. Kebalka, Emily G. Kebalka, Samantha B. Bridge, and Curtis B. Bridge; three great-grandchildren: Kira E. Gove, Bryce Gove, and Aaron Bowen; a brother, Paul C. Gove and his wife Mary of Grafton; a very special and "favorite" niece, Cheryl Connolly Riggas of Manchester; and many nieces and nephews as well. George is also survived by his very special and beloved Sheltie dog Quinten.

George was pre-deceased by an infant son, Andrew R. Gove; five brothers: Lawrence, Ralph, Leonard, Leslie, and Clarence Gove, Jr.; three sisters: Charlotte and Nellie Gove and Dorothy Gove Connolly.

In memory of George, the family requests that you plant a giant pumpkin in your backyard this summer and see what wonderful memories and enjoyment this can bring to you and your family.

Visiting hours were held on March 6 at Ricker Funeral Home in Lebanon.

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