# Ernest Stoukas Obituary

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Ernest "Ernie" John Stoukas, 96, of [Fords, New Jersey](https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/local/new-jersey/fords), passed away peacefully at East Orange Veterans Hospital on April 28th, 2023. He was born on August 25th, 1926, in Vauxhall, New Jersey, to parents Plato G. Stoukas and Madeline Stoukas (nee Pauciello), and was raised in West Orange, the eldest of three children.  
  
Ernie was a proud veteran of the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marines, U.S.M.R. and U.S. Army Reserves. He began his military career in 1944, enlisting in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He joined the U.S. Marine Reserves from 1946 to 1951, then signed up for active duty as a Gunnery Sergeant during the Korean War from 1951 to 1952. In 1953, he joined the Army Reserve and spent 22 years of dedicated service until he retired as a Command Sergeant Major in 1985. He received numerous medals, awards, and commendations for his exceptional service and unwavering dedication to duty, including the Chairman's Award, Presidential Service Award, and Meritorious Medal.  
  
In retirement, Ernie remained active in veterans organizations for 36 years, earning many more commendations and awards for his contributions. He was also involved in his community and willing to help in any way he could.  
  
In 1953, Ernie married the love of his life, Anmarie "Lee" Gala, settling in [Fords, NJ](https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/local/new-jersey/fords) in 1957, where they raised two children, Daniel and Kimberly.  
  
His distinguished career as a Probation Officer for the Essex County Probation Office began in 1954. In 1968 he served as a Federal Probation and Parole Officer for the United States Courts until his retirement in 1988. He earned a B.A. in Psychology at Upsala College and an M.A. in Professional Education at Seton Hall University.  
  
Ernie was the definition of a 'people person' who enjoyed spending time with his family, friends, and neighbors, but his most cherished time was with his grandchildren. He loved the outdoors, working on his house and tending to his garden. He also enjoyed family trips to his home in the Poconos and annual vacations with Lee in Cancun, where he organized fishing trips, holiday events, and ceremonies to honor Veteran's Day and Pearl Harbor. He was a fan of classic Westerns and war movies and was keenly interested in politics and current affairs. Ernie was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and loyal friend to many.  
  
He is survived by his son Daniel, daughter Kimberly, daughter-in-law Laura, son-in-law Edward Roxbury, grandchildren Michael and Gianna Stoukas, his sister Helen Pontus and numerous nephews and nieces. He was predeceased by his wife, Lee, his brother Plato (J.I.) Stoukas and his nephew Plato Stoukas, Jr.  
  
Interment and memorial service to be held at Cloverleaf Memorial Park, Woodbridge, NJ, on June 10th at 11:00am.