

Merle "Mike" Byrnes, 68

May 19, 1934 - April 11, 2003

CORPUS CHRISTI, TX – Merle Byrnes, son of Leonard and Carrie (Osterlund) Byrnes, was born May 19, 1934, in Denison. He attended grade school in Portsmouth and junior and senior high school in Harlan, graduating in 1953. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served for 23 years in the Navy Sea Bees, with three tours of duty in Vietnam. He was in the training field for 34 years, beginning in 1969 as an instructor with the Navy's heavy equipment operators school in California. He moved on to equipment manager for the Pacific Ocean and Pacific Rim Area, including Alaska. Upon retirement from the military, he directed truck driving and heavy equipment programs in both public and private schools for 10 years. In 1987, he and Devorah Fox formed Mike Byrnes and Associates in Phoenix, AZ, to produce programs for private combination distance learning and resident training schools for the training of truck drivers and heavy equipment operators. In 1988 they first published the book "Bumper to Bumper," the complete guide to tractor trailer operations contributing to the training of hundreds of thousands of drivers in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. They also authored three Commercial Driver's License test preparation guides.



In 1996, he married Devorah Fox and moved to Corpus Christi, TX. He was an active member of school associations as well as the American Trucking Associations, Interstate Truckload Carriers Conference and the Arizona Motor Transport Association. He served on the board of the professional Truck Driver Institute and on the education committee of the Commercial Vehicle Training Association. He died April 11, 2003, in a Corpus Christi hospital.

He is survived by his wife; his son, Michael G. Brynes; his daughter, Leigh Small; his sister, Leola Nagl; and his brothers, Howard and Patrick Brynes.