Edwin M. Chapline (aka G-Pa, “The Admiral”), 92, of Leawood KS, passed away on March 15 in Scottsdale AZ due to complications related to a fall on February 11. Given his trademark fighting spirit, Ed had made initial progress and enjoyed visitors both at the rehabilitation center and during his brief return to his beloved “snowbird” Scottsdale home. He was surrounded by family at Hospice of the Valley when he left this earth.

Ed was born in Orange, NJ at the family homestead on Thanksgiving Day, November 25, 1925, to Gordon Leslie Chapline (West Point, Class of 1919) and Virginia MacMurray Chapline. When he was a middle-schooler, the family of three moved to Spring Lake, NJ to live with Ed’s maternal grandmother. Subsequently, the family moved to Kirkwood, MO for his father’s career change. With global tensions afoot, and spurred on by Ed’s rascally antics and academic apathy, his father enrolled him as a cadet at Wentworth Military Academy in Lexington, MO. Ed always said that decision turned his life around and was eternally grateful for his father’s intervention. Ed gave back to Wentworth over the years by being a generous donor and serving on its board until the school closed its doors in 2017.

While at Wentworth, in February 1943, Ed saw information on the US Navy V-12 program, offering two years of college leading to a commission as Ensign USNR. After a brief 6 week enrollment at the University of Kansas during the fall of 1943, he reported to Missouri Valley College in Marshall, MO for duty and was given the rank of Seaman Apprentice. In June 1944, Ed received an appointment to the US Naval Academy and reported for induction as Midshipman 4th Class. He graduated with the Class of 1948 and was commissioned Ensign USN. His first assignment was the Battleship Missouri where, in addition to many new experiences, Ed had a chance to have a conversation with President Harry Truman. In December of 1949, he was ordered to Pensacola, FL for flight training and received his wings as Naval Aviator in May 1952. After duty in NAS Glenview, IL, Ed was assigned to the anti-submarine squadron VS-38, which was deployed to the Far East in 1953 as the Korean War was winding down. In April 1954, Ed transferred to Reserve status, continuing to fly and qualifying in jets at NAS Olathe, and in 1958 completed his commitment .

The flight hours Ed logged facilitated a chance poolside meeting at the La Posada Hotel in Santa Fe, NM with Sally Ramsey of Oklahoma City. Following a whirlwind, long-distance romance, Ed and Sally were married on May 25, 1955 in Oklahoma City, and the couple made Kansas City their lifetime hometown. Ed and Sally shared a wonderful life together filled with laughter, travel and family fun at Lake Lotawana and Hilton Head.

In launching his business career, Ed was a manufacturer’s rep for the Barcalounger brand of recliners, and Sally joined him on many early sales trips to Western Kansas and beyond. He quickly realized his skills were underutilized, and so in 1957 landed the job as the one-man Kansas City office for the Chicago-based Central Republic Brokerage Company. That same year, Dean Witter & Co. purchased that company, and as such Ed started his 50 year career with Dean Witter and its successor firm, Morgan Stanley. His father Gordon joined the office as well in 1958. Ed served as Branch Manager of the office until 1967, when he was named a limited partner. In 1972, Dean Witter & Co. went public, and Ed was proud to be listed in the prospectus as one of only two registered representatives in the firm with compensation exceeding that of the founding Witter family members. In 1983, he was recognized as part of Dean Witter’s Chairman’s Club, representing the top 1% of producers nationwide, a level maintained through his “semi-retirement” year of 1988. Ed also served on the Board of Directors of Oppenheimer Industries in the early to late 1980s.

Throughout his business career, Ed was able to weave his air of confidence and decisiveness with his charm and wit to foster long-standing relationships and friendships that endured beyond his retirement. His regional and national managers often marveled at his work productivity, and Ed prided himself on working smart hours instead of long hours. Deep loyalty to his firm, clients, and friends were all hallmarks of his life.

After a second retirement party in 2007 was thrown in his honor, Ed finally embraced his fully-retired life with gusto, including water skiing on Lotawana and tennis at the Carriage Club. He enjoyed a wide circle of friends from multiple decades, both in Kansas City and Scottsdale. Ed became a respectable golfer, and although his self-scoring system and verbal diatribes after hitting a disappointing shot ran counter to golf orthodoxy, a round of golf with him was always an entertaining and enjoyable experience. A lifelong sports fan, Ed was a 55 year Chiefs season ticket holder, and was to be recognized at the Royals home opener this year as a 50 year season ticket holder.

Ed also remained a die-hard Navy football fan, traveling back every year to the Washington, DC area for fall games and class reunions. He attended several Navy games this past season, including the snowy Army Navy game in Philadelphia in December. Ed loved the Navy and kept an ongoing active interest in the Naval Academy as a member of their Foundation’s President’s Circle and Robert Means Thompson Society.

Ed is survived by his loving wife of 63 years, Sally, his daughter, Ellen Kay (children, David and Sally), his son Robert (wife Elise, and their sons Tom and Mark), and son John (wife Cindy, and their twin daughters, Dede and Jessie.) He will be remembered as the patriarch of the family, whose strength, humor, and guidance endures forever in our hearts.

A celebration of life service will be held at Christ Church Anglican in Overland Park, KS on Tuesday, April 3 at 3:00pm. In lieu of flowers, a memorial for Ed has been established at the U.S. Naval Academy Foundation, 291Wood Road, Beech Hall, Annapolis, MD 24102, or www.usna.com/plannedgiving