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## **Michael Poler, 84, Loved Sailing, Darien Men's Club Member, Choir Singer, Active in United Church of Rowayton**

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**Date :** September 8, 2020

Michael Avery Poler passed away peacefully at his home in Norwalk on July 1, 2020, surrounded by family, including his wife of 42 years Petrea. He was 84.

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Michael was born on Sept. 23, 1935 in Huntington, New York to parents Helen M. (Saylor) and Emmons Edson Poler. Michael attended the Kent School in Kent, Connecticut (Class of 1954) and Babson College in Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts (Class of 1957).

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He also served in the United States Army Reserves from 1954 to 1962, attaining the rank of staff sergeant.

From a young age, Michael would never be far from the water. From the ages of 9 through 13, he spent the summers at Camp Dudley on shores of Lake Champlain. As a student at the Kent School, he served as coxswain for a crew in the Henley Royal Regatta on the River Thames in 1953.

Upon moving to Rowayton in 1960, Michael crewed various amateur fishing vessels, some ill-fated, before taking the helm of White Bear, which he faithfully captained for 43 years. For decades, Michael shuttled children and grandchildren to Jones Beach in Wantagh, New York.

Most often, though, Michael could be found on the porch of their home overlooking Chasmars Pond, where he and Petrea would entertain friends and family or, on the rare occasion that their house was empty, enjoy some peace, quiet and a few rounds of dominoes.

Michael was a devoted member of the United Church of Rowayton where he sang in the choir for 58 years. Additionally, Michael acted as a lay leader and deacon in the church, held various chairmanships, and served as treasurer for the church's Memorial Garden.

A lifelong choirboy, Michael also sang for Christ Church in Bronxville, New York and the Choir and Glee Club at the Kent School.

Michael worked for ITT Rayonier Inc. for 42 years, before he "retired" in 1990 and founded MAP International Inc., which he served as president until his death.

Michael also served as treasurer for Five Mile River Recitals and the Emig Foundation. He was a member of the Darien Senior Men's Association and the Union League Club in New York City.

He was predeceased by his parents, his younger brother Henry S. Poler, and his granddaughter Jae Ling Sweeny.

Michael also leaves behind eight children – Christine P. Fleming, Theodore A. Poler, Kimberly P. Albanese, Timothy E. Poler, Peter A. Sweeney, Christine C. Sweeny, Catherine M. Sweeny, and J. David Sweeny; 15 grandchildren; his younger sister, Margaretta E. Poler; sister-in-law, Gail M. Poler; and four nieces and nephews.

A skilled craftsman, Michael also leaves behind a meticulously organized workshop, where several sons-in-law and grandchildren learned the proper way to carve a turkey under his impatient supervision.

Finally, in the estimation of the author, Michael was a truly great grandfather/grumpa/far far. He will be missed dearly by all who knew him, but his absence is sure to be felt most acutely in the ice cream industry.

A public memorial service for Michael will take place in September, circumstances permitting. In the meantime, Michael asked that anyone so-inclined make a donation in his memory to [Camp Dudley](#) in

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Westport, New York and the [United Church of Rowayton](#).

— [an obituary](#) from *Edward Lawrence Funeral Home*