



# Jay Fraser Keyes

MAY 22, 1929 - DEC 30, 2025



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## **Jay Fraser Keyes**

MAY 22, 1929 - DEC 30, 2025

**J**ay Keyes, 96, of Clearwater Beach, passed away peacefully at home on December 30, with family at his side.

Jay was born on May 22, 1929 in New York City, the son of Warren Jay Keyes and Helen Bennett Sayer, and raised in Warwick, NY. After serving 2 years in the Navy aboard submarines, he was mistakenly drafted into the Army, subsequently receiving honorable discharges from two different branches of the military.

He then embarked on a highly successful career as a hotelier/restaurantier, serving as General Manager for properties including the Boar's Head Inn (Charlottesville, VA), the Hotel Northampton (Northampton, MA), Port O Call (Tierra Verde/St. Petersburg, FL), Sapphire Bay (St. Thomas, VI), Colonnades Beach Hotel (Palm Beach Shores, FL - working for the larger-than-life John D. MacArthur), and two Hilton hotels (Williamsburg, VA and Clearwater Beach, FL - working for Stan "The Man" Musial).

While at Port O Call, he met and married the former Janet Dillon, adding her three children (Dwight, Susan & Doug Gilbert) to his two sons from a previous marriage (Ben and Seth), creating a new enduring family. In 1973, Jay and Jan opened The Bank 1890's Restaurant on Clearwater Beach.

After a rough and tumble first year, they made the decision to offer a buffet full-time. The Bank then became one of the most popular and beloved landmarks on the beach. Jay was also very active in civic affairs as a past-president of the Clearwater Beach Association, serving on the board of the Jolly Trolley (and was honored to have a trolley car named for him), was actively involved in Sertoma, and diligently served the Tampa Bay Harvest.

His family and friends will no doubt remember him best for his kindness, loyalty, generosity and devilish sense of humor. An inveterate practical joker, the stories of his escapades with comrades-



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in-arms G. David Howard, Bob Jones and other friends have become legendary in Clearwater Beach over the years.

Jay was predeceased by his sons Dwight and Doug Gilbert, daughter Susan Hladik, brother Warren, and co-conspirator G. David Howard. He is survived by his beloved wife Jan, sons Ben (Kim) and Seth (Sally), numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren, as well as many, many friends whose lives he touched.

A giant has left the island.





# Events

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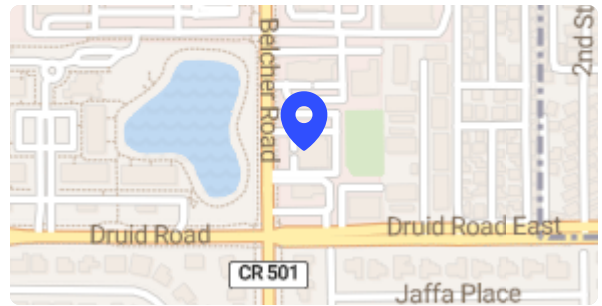
## Funeral Service

 **Tuesday**, January 6, 2026


 10:00 AM ET

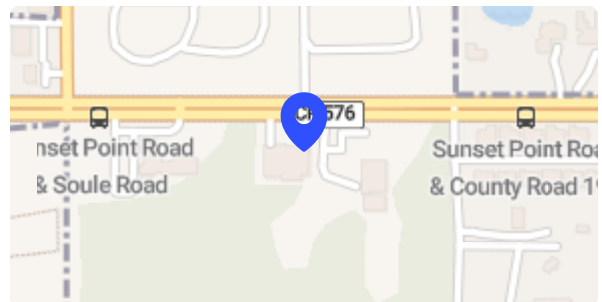
 **Moss Feaster Funeral Home and Cremation - Clearwater**

693 South Belcher Road, Clearwater FL 33764



## Cemetery Details

 **Sylvan Abbey Memorial Park**  
2853 Sunset Point Road, Clearwater FL





## Tribute Wall

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**Stephen G.** planted a grove of 3 Memorial Trees in honor of Jay.



January 6 at 11:36 AM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Jay by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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