

## *The Benjamin Award*



*The Benjamin Award was established in 2009 by Jean Troemel in memory of her husband, Captain Benjamin H. Troemel U.S.N. who was born June 10, 1915 and died at the age of 93 on September 29, 2008.*

*Benjamin Troemel was the first New York merchant marine graduate to reach Naval Avocation aviator status. He was stationed on the famous ship Enterprise, "The Big E", during the attack on Pearl Harbor.*

*He retired from the service as a captain in 1959 and then moved with his wife and son to Winter Haven, Florida.*

*Ben's first wife, Alice, commissioned Jean to paint his portrait and said at the time, referring to Jean's painting, "Be sure you do a good job, as someday you might live with it!" That comment did come true; Alice died several years later and Ben and Jean eventually married. Jean adopted Ben's son, Benjamin H. Troemel, Jr., who was seven years old at the time; as a young man he attended the Air Force academy and then became a pilot with Delta Airlines.*

*At one time Ben took art lessons from Jean but he gave her all of his art supplies when they were married. Ben attended many of Florida Artist Group symposiums and was an enthusiastic patron of the arts.*

*He and Jean traveled the world over and had many adventures. St. Augustine was their home base where Ben was a partner in a travel agency and Jean ran the Professional Artists of St. Augustine Gallery. Ben and Jean were married for 43 years.*

*Jean Troemel was born May 4th, 1921. She was invited to join Florida Artist Group by Helen Sawyer in 1954. She continues to work with her paintings and is an active member of the Florida Artist Group in Area VI .*

