



Elmer Sovern

January 25, 1925 - April 19, 2013

Elmer Sovern, Jr., age 88, of Albia, died Friday, April 19, 2013, under the care of Circle of Life Hospice at Legacy Lodge in Chariton.

He was born January 25, 1925 to Elmer Sovern and Lois Noviss in Springport, MI. He grew up in Level Park, the middle son of eight children. He had a long paper route, by bike, to help pay for family groceries during the depression. He bought his first Model T when he was 17 and drove it home in third gear because he'd never had driving lessons.

Elmer was in the first 18 year old World War II draft while he was still in Battle Creek High School. He served in the 5th and 7th Army, 3rd Division, 15th Infantry under Generals Mark Clark and George Patton. He took part in Operation Torch in Casablanca, North Africa; Operation Shingle in Anzio, Italy; Battle of Monte Cassino in Italy; and the Push to Rome, where his feet were frozen in a fox hole. He was hospitalized in Italy, reclassified and discharged in October 1944. He earned the Combat Infantry Badge, Bronze Star, and two clusters.

Elmer graduated from Battle Creek High School in 1946, while working at the Kellogg Company, learning to run all the machines and later began working in Research and Development. He was especially proud of his teams' development of Raisin Bran, Special K, and Product 19.

Elmer married Martha Edgerton in Battle Creek in 1945 and they had five children. Martha died in 1957 during the Asian Flu pandemic. He married Carol King at her home in Albia on November 29, 1958. He continued his work at Kellogg's doing research and development along with engineer's work in Manchester, England; London; Ontario; Mexico; and all Kellogg plants in the United States.

Elmer left Kellogg's for Nabisco in 1968 and worked with a team to design and build a cereal plant in Aurora, IL. In 1972, Elmer and Carol moved to Albia and later bought Behnkes Famous Fryers. He became an independent cereal consultant and moved to

Trinidad, West Indies with Carol in 1985. While there, he designed the Universal Foods plant, supervised construction, and designed the single line machines to produce six cereals. He wrote all the production manuals and trained the workers. He also did waste control for Universal's biscuit and candy plants. In 1992, Elmer and Carol moved to Corowa, Australia where Elmer managed waste control at the Uncle Toby's cold cereal plant.

After retirement, Elmer and Carol bought a small condo on Emerald Lake in Naples, FL. He enjoyed deep sea and lake fishing there for 18 years and was really proud to win the Caribbean World Contest one year with his Trinidad team. Elmer also enjoyed fishing in Michigan; Florida; Iowa; Alaska; Tasmania, Australia; Great Barrier Reef, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Elmer's family, especially the grandchildren and great grandchildren were special to him. Family, fishing, and baseball were his favorite past times.

Elmer is survived by his wife, Carol Sovern of Albia; four children, Mary (Charlie) Hall of Lancaster, PA, Robert (Barbara) Sovern of Gig Harbor, WA, Alice (Lee) Gaus of Flossmoor, IL, and Richard Sovern of Albia; twelve grandchildren; and 14 great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Martha; and a son, William Wesley.

Funeral services will be 11 a.m., Friday, April 26, 2013, at Trinity United Methodist Church in Albia, with Pastor Neil Montz officiating. Military rites, provided by the American Legion of Albia, Lovilia, and Melrose will follow services at the church. Burial will be Monday, April 29, 2013, in Floral Lawn Memorial Gardens in Battle Creek, MI.

Visitation will be 2-8 p.m., Thursday, April 25, 2013, at Tharp Funeral Home in Albia, with Elmer's family present from 5-8 p.m. A presentation, provided by Elmer's family, will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Memorials may be made to Albia Chamber of Commerce for the Fourth of July Fishing Competition at the reservoir or to the 4-H Fishing Club.

Comments



“ Alice My thoughts and prayers are with your family. I was hoping, if there was a service in Battle Creek, I would be back from vacation in time. Unfortunately we won't arrive home until Monday afternoon. Please know I'm thinking of you. I've lost my Dad also and know how tough a loss it is.

Much love

Pat (Trisquet) Carpenter

Pat Carpenter - Battle Creek, MI - Friend - April 28, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ My uncle will never be forgotten. I remember how giving he could be. He was always family! He never hesitated to give a helping hand. I was blessed to go over seas and spend time with him and my aunt Carol when they were in Trinidad, West Indies. It was a very special time for me.. He will be missed. Thanks for all the memories. One of your loving nieces, GloriaY

Gloria Abnet - Portage, MI - niece - April 28, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Elmer was a very nice person and came from a wonderful family..

Virginia Goad Aumaugher - East Leroy, MI - cousin - April 27, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ I'm so sorry for your loss. You and your family are in my prayers.

A friend from Trinity UMC,

Kim

Kim Jolly - Knoxville, IA - April 25, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Thank you Uncle Elmer for all of the great memories from when I was young. Spending time at your house in Battle Creek with everyone I love that house it was so big and the fun I had there with everyone. It was always a busy house. People going this way and that way. When I go back to BC I always have to drive by the house. I will miss you but I do have all of those great memories. Rest in peace . Love you always Amy

Amy Sovern Decker - Port St Lucie , FL - niece - April 24, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Carol, Richard, Adam, and Bobby...my sincere condolences on the passing of a wonderful man. When I met him, he was smiling. And every time after always still smiling. Rest in peace sweet Elmer, may you be flown to your final home, on the wings of the sweetest Angels.

Julie Barnes - Albia, IA - friend - April 23, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ My Poppy was a great and amazing man. He was a wonderful grandfather and perfect great-grandfather. He will forever be in my memories and heart. Peyton Jane misses her Poppy too. Thank you for all the great experiences and life lessons you have given and taught us!! I love you Poppy.

Ali Pedersen - Flossmoor, IL - Grand Daughter - April 22, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Thirty five years ago Elmer hired me as his Office Manager at Behnkes Famous Fryers. I was 6 months pregnant at the time. When my baby Sarah Beth was born he let me bring her to work and she slept in a clean chicken box by my desk. After Behnkes closed and I went to work at the bank my marriage crumbled and once again Elmer and Carol came to my rescue, both financially and allowed me to live in their home for 6 1/2 years while Elmer did consulting work out of the country. He was a great man...and I will miss him.
Kathy

Kathy Elliott - Albia, IA - Friend - April 22, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ CAROL, DICK, BOB AND FAMILY WE ARE VERY SORRY TO HEAR OF ELMERS PASSING. HE WAS A GOOD FRIEND, NEIGHBOR, AND FORMER EMPLOYER OF MINE. WE WILL MISS SEEING HIM EVEN THOUGH HE WAS NOT ABLE TO GET OUT AS MUCH AS HE USED TO. HE WAS A PROUD VETERAN AND A GOOD MAN. RIP GOOD FRIEND./MAX AND ROSE COX

MAX COX - ALBIA, IA - neighbor - April 22, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Will, Molly & Abbey

Molly - Mokena, IL - April 21, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Dad was my hero. He gave me a strong desire for loyalty, patriotism, love of family and Miss Carol. I will miss you Dad and I will make sure Mom (Miss Carol) is taken care of in the manner in which she is accustomed.

Semper Fi

Robert H. Sovern - Gig Harbor, WA - Son - April 21, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ Carol and family,
We wish to express our sincere sympathy to you on the loss of your beloved husband and father.

Diane and Phil Whitson

Diane Whitson - Albia, IA - friend - April 21, 2013 at 12:00 AM