



Obituary

Born: Saturday, November 14, 1931

Died: Sunday, March 24, 2019

Elmer H. "Sonny" Tepe

Nov. 14, 1931 - March 24, 2019

SOUTH BEND, IN - Elmer H. "Sonny" Tepe, 87, died peacefully in his home on Sunday morning, March 24, 2019 surrounded by his loving family. He was born on November 14, 1931 to Elmer H. Tepe Sr. and Anna (Schmidt) Tepe. He graduated in 1949 from John Adams High School. He followed in his father's footsteps becoming a trained Certified Gemologist. In November of 1949 his father passed away and Sonny took over his dad's jewelry repair and manufacturing business. He was later joined by his younger brother, Roy in 1951. Together, they created the Tepe Catalog Showroom (Tepe's) in 1958.

In 1960, they opened the first Tepe's store in South Bend on South Main Street. Over the course of the next 31 years, they expanded the business to nine additional stores throughout Indiana and Michigan employing over 700 people. In 1980, Roy retired and Sonny was joined by his two sons, Mark and Matt. Customer service was the foundation of their success.

On January 9, 1960, he married his honey, Dolores Wittling and together they shared 59 wonderful years of marriage. He is survived by his four children of South Bend/Granger, Indiana, Mark (Erin) Tepe, Matt Tepe, Michele (Mike) McNeill, and Manette Tepe; along with his six grandchildren, Caitlin (Rob) Langtry, Brianne (Jordan Roy) Tepe, Maggie Tepe, Brigid Tepe, Kelaine (Lavarr) Barnett, and Michael Tepe McNeill. He is also survived by three great-grandchildren, Jayden, Jackson, and Lena Barnett. Also surviving are his brother, Roy Tepe and sister, Nancy (Tom) Sikora as well as many nieces, nephews, and relatives. Preceding him in death were his parents; sister, Shirley (Desmond) Bisley; and granddaughter, Manette Josephine McNeill.

Sonny was a quiet, unpretentious, extremely generous man with a smile and sense of humor that endeared him not only to his family but to all that met him. Although his health was failing in recent years, his faith and determination were present until the very end. Sonny loved Notre Dame football, golf, Magician Lake, the family pool, and fireworks. His real joy was spending time with family, especially on his favorite holiday, Christmas. Sonny was an Army Veteran who served during the Korean War.

The family will receive friends and family at Welsheimer Family Funeral Home, 17033 Cleveland Road, South Bend,

Service Summary

Visitation

4:00 PM to 7:00 PM, Thu Mar 28, 2019

Cleveland Rd. Location

17033 Cleveland Road
South Bend, IN 46635

Mass of Christian Burial

Fri Mar 29, 2019

Cathedral of Saint Matthew

1701 Miami
South Bend, IN 46613

Indiana on Thursday, March 28 from 3:00-6:00 pm following a 3:00 p.m. prayer service. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Friday, March 29 at 11:30 am at Saint Mathew Cathedral, 1701 Miami Street, South Bend, Indiana with Rev. Terry Fisher and Rev. Herbert Yost officiating. A visitation will be held at the church one hour prior to the service. A private burial service will take place at a later date at St. Joseph Valley Memorial Park.

In Sonny's memory, memorial donations may be made to Center for Hospice Care, 501 Comfort Place, Mishawaka, Indiana 46545 or to The Christ Child Society, Inc., 308 South Scott Street, PO Box 1286, South Bend, Indiana 46624 or to the donor's choice. Family and friends may leave email condolences at www.welsheimer.com.

Charitable donations may be made in Elmer's memory to the following organizations:

Center for Hospice Care,
501 Comfort Ln., Mishawaka, IN, 46545

The Christ Child Society, Inc
308 South Scott Street PO Box 1286 South Bend, Indiana
46624