



Obituary

Born: Sunday, November 22, 1931

Died: Thursday, December 17, 2020

Woodland Hills Funeral Home
507-387-5504

Elwin "Ace" "Gunner" "El" John Gunnink, age 89 passed away on December 17, 2020 at New Perspective in Mankato.

A Celebration of Elwin's Life will be held at a later date and will be announced. Woodland Hills Funeral Home of Mankato is handling arrangements.

El was born on November 22, 1931 in Hull, Iowa to William and Winnie (Rikkers) Gunnink. He was the 5th in a family of seven children. He attended Hull Public Schools and graduated from High School in 1949. Elwin was always interested in sports and started playing basketball around 4th grade. In High School, he played basketball (1350 career points) and also was a baseball pitcher in the fall and the spring. He also played baseball two summers on the Am. Legion team. Besides his love of sports, El enjoyed singing in choir and also in quartets with his brothers and later he joined the Mankato Riverblenders. Elwin received a scholarship from Westmar College in LeMars, IA, played basketball all four years and made All-Conference. He also played baseball and ran track there. Summer of his sophomore year, he pitched for Sibley, a semi-pro team until the sponsors ran out of money. He graduated Magna Cum Laude with a degree in Education. He enrolled in Officer Candidate School for the Navy and was assigned to the USS Epperson, DDE 719 and traveled the Pacific Rim. After the Navy, he attended colleges in Missouri and North Carolina and graduated with a Masters in Mathematics and Science. He went to Greeley, CO for a Masters program in the summer of 1962 and met Mildred Musolf. He soon proposed and they got married on August 5th. El taught in Rockwell City, Iowa and then took a job in Mankato, MN teaching Algebra and Geometry at Franklin Junior High School and then later at Mankato East High School. He coached basketball, cross country and track receiving his 25 year MN coaching award. After retiring, he worked as a volunteer for Hilltop Neighbors, drove the van to the VA clinic in the cities and worked as a treasurer for the American Legion. He was Commander 1996-97 and was active on the firing squad, usually as flag bearer. El also was very active with the Blue Earth County Republicans. El loved to fish and had a cabin on Lake Spitzer. He loved to read and would do the crossword in the newspaper every day.

Elwin is survived by his wife, Millie, two daughters, Heidi (Joel) Wyn and Holly (Brent) Erdman, grandchildren, Kent (Alaina) Harris, Alex (Rita) Harris, Christian (Ashley) Harris, Bethany (Alex) Reuter, Tresa Reuter, Kyra (Ben) Beske and Shawn Reuter, step-granddaughter, Emery Erdman, great-grandchildren, Landon, Spencer, Trenton, and Hannah,

Service Summary

Pending

Location: - Not available -

brother Norman Gunnink, and many nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his parents, brothers, Richard, Harry and Frank and sisters, Esther Ten Braak and Ruby Huffman, and grandson, David Reuter.

Please make memorials to Alzheimer's Foundation of America or the American Legion Lorentz Post 11, Mankato, MN.