



Roger J. Tornow

August 9, 1935 - January 18, 2019

Roger Tornow, age 83, passed away Friday, January 18, 2019 in Omro.

Roger Tornow and his wife of more than 58 years, Joyce, have three sons; Joel (wife Jodie, sons Kyle and Evan); Terry (wife Sharon, sons Tim, Andy and Nate); and Dan (son DJ). Roger and Joyce also have two great grandchildren (Eddie and Carmen).

Roger worked for Miles Kimball Company as a printer for more than 45 years. He served his country as a staff sergeant / platoon leader in the Wisconsin Army National Guard. In 1961 he and was called up to Fort Lewis, Washington. He served his community as a Town of Utica volunteer fireman.

Roger enjoyed snowmobiling with friends, hunting, bowling and playing golf and softball, for which he was also an umpire. Roger was an award-winning photographer. He and his artist-wife traveled to many exhibits and art fairs throughout Wisconsin, calling their display "The Wisconsin Natural Couple." Together they enjoyed developing their lawn's park-like setting.

The funeral service for Roger will be held on Wednesday, January 23, 2019 at 11 a.m. in Poklasny Funeral Home 870 W. South Park Avenue Oshkosh, WI 54902. A time of visitation will be held at the funeral home on Wednesday from 9:30 a.m. until the time of service. Burial will take place at Liberty Prairie in Pickett.

Comments



“ My dad gave a lot of himself and was a great example for his family. He was born to Otto and Margaret Tornow in 1935. They had a farm near Rush Lake, and as their only-child he worked hard with his parents to maintain it.

He gave of himself when he attended Ripon High School, where in addition to being a good student he was also member of FFA, and where he played four sports. He even did some acting when he played a ghost in the school play Arsenic and Old Lace.

In between all of that work and giving, he apparently managed to enjoy the less-serious side of life. I say that because when I was young I found a caption in his high school yearbook that read “Roger doesn’t let school get in the way of his education.” At first I thought that was a negative comment, but as I got older and thought about it more, I realized that it was really a complement in that my dad was considered a well-rounded person who didn’t take life seriously all the time. I think that those traits of his are a gift to his family.

My mom, Joyce, and my dad are one of the all-time great romances. They were married for more than 58 years on their way to forever. Not only did they give the world all they did, but through them the world has their three sons, six grandsons and two great grandchildren.

My dad gave to his country by being a member of the Army National Guard. During the Berlin Crisis of 1961, the country asked that he and his small family put their lives on hold when he was called up to active duty at Fort Lewis, Washington.

He gave to his family through his strong work ethic, working for the Miles Kimball Company for 45 years. This strong work ethic made him a good provider and set an excellent example for his sons, which have in turn passed that work ethic along to their children.

I’ve been using the term “dad” rather than “father” because he was more of a dad than a father. He was a staff sergeant and platoon leader in the National Guard, and he believed in discipline.

Whenever his three sons had, shall we say, a lapse in discipline, he corrected the situation quite effectively, sometimes with just a menacing look. So Kyle and Evan, now you know where that comes from. But he also gave his family the gift of good natured teasing, which was another way that he showed how much he cared for his family.

When we used to go to my paternal grandpa’s house in Ripon, the thermostat would usually be set at about 150 degrees, or at least that’s the way it felt to us. With a wink to us my dad would wait until my grandpa was watching wrestling and then do all of the visitors a favor and turn the temperature down without my grandpa knowing it. Of course my grandpa would eventually get cold and turn the temperature back up,

wondering why it had gotten cold. My grandpa would then go back to watching wrestling, none the wiser for what my dad had done. My dad would then give us his famous smile and we'd all laugh.

Following my high school graduation ceremony, my dad shook my hand, which without words said to me "congratulations, you've worked hard and reached a milestone." To this day, I do the same with my sons. So Kyle and Evan, that's another thing from Grandpa T.

As happens to us all, time eventually caught up with my dad. My wife, our two sons and I have talked about how sad it is that the three of them did not get to see more of the best of my dad, as I had been so fortunate to see.

When my family would come to visit my parents in Oshkosh, my dad would again shake my hand and he would smile. As time went by, I could see the hands that had given so much were growing thin and weak, and his famous smile was fading. But whether in their home in those last years, or when we visited him at the care center before he passed, he would reach out to shake my hand.

Dad, thanks for giving everyone so much.

Joel Tornow
January, 2019

Joel Tornow - January 24 at 10:31 AM