



John Joseph Corcoran, Jr.

November 5, 1923 - October 27, 2018

John Joseph Corcoran, Jr., 94, of Ft. Collins, Colorado, formerly of Chicago, passed away peacefully at his home on October 27, 2018, surrounded by his devoted children.

Born at home on November 5, 1923, in Chicago, Illinois, to John J. Corcoran, Sr., and Delia Burke Corcoran, both formerly of Ireland, he was the third of their five children. He always said he had a "love affair" with his mother and that he never saw her get mad. John was definitely a "tinker," but he could do no wrong in her eyes. A favorite story he told: "the "D" on his report card stood for "dandy," and she believed him. He nicknamed her "Bridgette" and always spoke to her with an Irish Brogue which never failed to make her giggle. She called him "Jackie" but nicknamed him "Buns" because whenever she sent him to the bakery, he ate most of the hot cross buns on his way home. His dad walked a beat on the Chicago Police force for over 40 years. His nickname was "Curly." He ruled the roost with "the belt" but was a faithful, loving father.

After graduating from Calumet High School where he enjoyed some notoriety as a promising baseball player (Chicago Tribune, June 9, 1942), John enlisted in the U.S. Army and honorably served his country in the Pacific during World War II. To the relief of his dear mother, he and his two brothers who served in the service concurrently with him were reunited and their sharing of "war" stories became infamous in the family: Jim served with the famous 101st Airborne Squadron and Marcus was in charge of delivering supplies behind enemy lines throughout Europe and continued to serve after the war. John saw some action, but he said he "had to turn the radio on to find out who was winning" and also that "war was hell--sometimes the beer was warm." His family never got tired of hearing the 3 brothers sharing their WWII exploits as well as their many other real-life stories (like living across the street from the infamous southside prohibition era gangster, Spike O'Donnell). The 3 Corcoran Brothers were natural storytellers and comedians, and their stories and jokes are now legends in the family and are a treasured legacy.

After the war, John went to a trade school which he called "the college of knowledge." He became a vested member of the IBEW Local 134 in Chicago and worked for 40 years as

an electrician before retiring in Colorado. He gave credit to the GI Bill for giving him his "career."

John is survived by his wife Suzanne P. Corcoran of Wisconsin; his revered children and their spouses: John and Christine Corcoran of Wisconsin, Kathleen and Kelsey Smith of Ft. Collins, Steve Corcoran of Ft. Collins; four adoring grandchildren and their spouses: Jessica and Steve Rezmer, John Corcoran IV, Casey and Brittney Smith, and Cary and Candace Smith; six adorable great-grandchildren: Madelyn and Colin Rezmer, Ford, Oaks, Poppy, and Hattie Smith; loving siblings: Mary and Bob Seiler of Illinois and Therese Evans of Connecticut; and many cherished nieces and nephews.

All throughout his life, John had an amazing capacity to love and be loved. He wasn't just funny, he was magnetic. It could happen in an instant at an unexpected location like a baseball game or on a train or in a restaurant--anywhere, anytime--he drew people in and made them laugh and feel happy to have met him. Particular mention must be made here for his "extended" in-law families: the Johnson/Clarke and the Smith/Griffith/Schuley families. He became revered as "Gramps" by all of you and you gave him so much more in return.

Reunited with him in heaven are his beloved parents; his two brothers and their spouses: Marcus and Anne and James and Fran all of Chicago; brother-in-law Bill Evans of Connecticut; his precious nephew: Stanley Nowac and Tony Knight; Harry, Dorothy and Jenny (Johnson) Frasier of Chicago; and Casey Val Smith of Omaha.

A celebration of life will be held in the spring. Please email smithkathy555@yahoo.com to receive the celebration details when finalized.

In lieu of flowers, donations in John's name may be made to the American Cancer Society or St. Jude's Children's Hospital.

Comments



“ It’s hard to say good-bye to someone we love so much. Especially a person like Grandpa who made us laugh with his stories, his songs and his smile. Who shared his life and love with everyone he met. We love you, and we will miss you. But we know that you have one of your biggest fans up there in heaven to welcome you with open arms. As selfish as it is, knowing that you are with my dad, probably singing and dancing some goofy song puts a smile on my face and gives me the strength to say goodbye. From the Omaha Smiths we love you Grandpa, thank you for the memories, the stories and the songs.

Omaha Smiths - November 12, 2018 at 09:17 PM



“ Boy, you said it! It gives me the strength, too, to see him with Casey again chatting it up, lighting fireworks, and riding on roller coasters, and singing and laughing! He loved the Omaha Smiths soooo much, and you gave him sooo much back in return. I remember went he met you all at Ashely's BD party with the slip and slide and the video camera and the Omaha minor league baseball game and your swim meets.. He lived well off those memories and many, many more especially the ones from Disney and all the wonderful holiday celebrations--food, family and fun--the kind of family life he deserved. much love, Kathy

Kathy Corcoran Smith - November 26, 2018 at 08:13 PM



“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



Omaha Smiths - November 12, 2018 at 08:17 PM