



Leo Anthony McCoy

March 16, 2011 - March 16, 2011

Leo Anthony McCoy, 84, of Fort Collins, Colorado formerly of Cozad, Nebraska, passed away on March 9, 2011 after a valiant battle with vascular dementia. Leo was the fourth child of six, born to Patrick and Kathleen McCoy on July 13, 1926 in Greeley, Nebraska. Leo graduated in 1943 from Sacred Heart High School in Greeley. At the age of 17, Leo attended Midshipman School in San Mateo, CA. After graduation, he was assigned to the ship "White Swallow." His ship traveled to Guadalcanal, numerous Pacific Islands, and Sydney, Australia, before returning to San Francisco. They supplied the 12th Special Seabees and the Third Marines. The White Swallow then went by convoy to Okinawa, Japan. Leo was part of the second wave into Japan. After returning to SF, Leo was assigned to the Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York. After graduation, Leo joined the Coast Guard and sailed on a ship called the "Benjamin Hawkins." With the Coast Guard, Leo sailed to Holland, England, Wales, and again to Japan. Leo met the love of his life, Rosella Dreher, at the Rexall Drug Store in Grand Island, Nebraska. They were married on August 14, 1945 at 8:30 am. It was around noon on their wedding day that word came that the war ended in the Pacific. Leo and Rosella enjoyed 53 years together before Rosella passed away on November 4, 1998. They were a couple who enjoyed life to the fullest. They belonged to bridge, blackjack, and dance clubs. They were members of Christ the King Catholic Church in Cozad, Nebraska. They loved to travel, especially to Jamaica and Mexico. They were very strong supporters of Nebraska football.

After the war, Leo moved to Grand Island, NE. It was in GI that he began his career in the shoe business. He started work at Kernan's Shoes in 1946. In 1954, Leo and Rosella moved to Kearney, NE to manage Claussen's Shoe Store. In 1972, Leo completely remodeled a building in Lexington, NE where they owned and operated McCoy's Shoes. People from all over the state would drive to McCoy's to have Leo professionally fit every age men, women, and children in shoes. Leo McCoy was a pillar of the community. He had been active in the Knights of Columbus as a 4th Degree Knight and was also a member of the Masons. Leo was a Boy Scout Master who at one time, had 75 boys. Over the period of time when he was Scout Master he had over 30 young men earn the rank of Eagle Scout, including both of his sons, Tom & Terry. Leo earned the Silver Beaver Award for his long and distinguished service as an adult leader in the Boy Scouts. He is a Life Member of the Elk's and was Exalted Ruler of the Kearney Lodge. He was a member of the Officer Group or ritual team that traveled and competed in New York, Miami, San Francisco, and Chicago. Leo won the first All American ever to be awarded to the state of Nebraska. Leo is also a lifetime member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Leo was a man of many talents. He loved to garden, raising every type of vegetable and the most beautiful roses and gladiolas. The McCoy family spent quality time together camping in several states and relaxing on their pontoon boat. He was a gourmet cook, always trying a "new dish." If you had the pleasure of dining at his table, you were treated to a memorable meal. He was an avid hunter and fisherman. Leo could remodel or build anything, including a speedboat. He made miniature dollhouses. Rosella and Leo loved to dance and were always the last couple off the dance floor. He played the tuba and the banjo. Leo was preceded in death by his wife Rosella 1998, son Terry 1985, son-in-law Gene Stenson 2004, his parents, 3 brothers and 1 sister. He is celebrated in life by his daughters Mary Lynn Stenson of Republic, Kansas and Cynthia Jeff Walters of Fort Collins, Colorado, and his son Thomas Kathy McCoy of Cozad, Nebraska. He leaves a legacy of 9 grandchildren: Mike Lori Stenson, David Stenson, Sarah Jake

Kunc, Jon Beverly Stenson, Casey Vanatta, Jennifer Vanatta, Jason Nicole McCoy, Michaella McCoy, and Ryan McCoy; 10 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great-grandson. His sister, Agnes Bill Jarvis, lives in Littleton, Colorado. Leo's family wishes to express their gratitude to the staff of Rehabilitation & Nursing Center of the Rockies in Fort Collins, CO for giving Leo 10 years of exceptional care. The staff called Leo "papa" and treated him with love and respect. Also, the family has a deep appreciation for Pathways Hospice who gave Leo the gift of comfort and dignity during his final days. A visitation will take place on Friday, March 18 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Berryman Funeral Home in Cozad. A Rosary will be recited at 7 p.m. on Friday at Christ the King Catholic Church in Cozad. Mass of the Christian Burial will be held on Saturday, March 19 at 11 a.m. at Christ the King Catholic Church in Cozad with Father Don O'Brien as celebrant. Burial with military honors will be at St. Ann's Cemetery in Lexington. Memorial contributions may be made to Rehabilitation & Nursing Center of the Rockies in care of Berryman Funeral Home at 620 East 22nd St. in Cozad, Nebraska.