



Vernon Hackbarth

October 31, 2007

Vernon Henry Hackbarth went to be with the Lord and his beloved wife, Gert, on Oct. 31, 2007, at the age of 91, after a valiant struggle with cancer. He received excellent care from Hospice of Larimer County and Centre Health and Rehab Facility. Vern was born June 29, 1916, to Herman and Alma Struve Hackbarth in Deshler, Neb. He graduated from high school in Arlington, Neb., where he played basketball and ran track. He attended college before he served as a sergeant in the Army Air Corps in Nome, Alaska, during WWII. Vern married Gertrude Elizabeth Glismann in Arlington in 1941. Their daughter, Mary, was born in Arlington. Following the war, the family settled in Hastings, Neb., where Vern began a career as a salesman for Heinz Foods. Promotions took the family to Omaha and later Des Moines, Iowa, where Vern retired as regional sales manager in 1965. Vern and Gert then moved to Fort Collins where the couple started and operated the original Colonial Hickory House restaurant on Lemay Avenue where they earned renown for Vern's hickory-fired barbecued meats and Gert's homemade pies. Upon selling their restaurant, the couple retired again to pursue their favorite pastimes, golfing and bowling. Growing restless, in 1976, Vern founded Vern's Toffee House, which has received local and worldwide acclaim for its butter almond toffee. Joined in the business by daughter, Mary, and son-in-law, Ron Hert in 1984, Vern retired for the last time in 1992, but his legacy as a toffee maker survives into the future. One of Vern's unique gifts was a keen mathematical mind. In addition to using this talent in his business dealings, Vern was an avid sports

fan who enjoyed playing cards with his brothers at the BPOE 804 and picking the winners of football and basketball games. He was preceded in death by his parents; his sister, Lillian Carver of Wichita, Kan., and his beloved wife, Gert. He is survived by his sister, Selma Jarog of Oak Park, Ill.; his daughter, Mary, and son-in-law, Ron Hert of Fort Collins; his granddaughter, Stefanie O'Neill and her husband, Patrick, of Greeley; and his dearly loved great-granddaughter, Katherine Elizabeth O'Neill also of Greeley. Vern will be especially missed by his loving family, and also by his friends at St. John's Lutheran Church, the Elks club and the many customers and suppliers who enjoyed his humor and conversation. A funeral service will be at 11 a.m., Monday at St. John' s Lutheran Church, 305 E. Elizabeth, where Vern and Gert were members since moving to Fort Collins in 1965. A private graveside service will be at Grandview Cemetery. In remembrance of Vern's death, Vern's Toffee will be closed Monday, Nov. 5. The Rev. Brian Bestian will officiate at the service. A visitation will be from 1 to 3 p.m., Sunday at Bohlender Funeral Chapel. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Hospice of Larimer County or The American Cancer Society in care of Bohlender Funeral Chapel. Friends may send condolences to the family at www.bohlenderfuneralchapel.com.