



Leo Soukup

November 9, 1923 - March 6, 2013

Leo Joseph Soukup was born to Joseph J. Soukup and Mary (Macku) Soukup on 11.9.1923, Exeter, NE. He passed away 3.6.2013 at Exeter Care Center, at the age of 89 years. He was the youngest of 4 children and grew up on a farm south of Exeter. Leo attended School District 25 and District 33. He graduated from Exeter High School in 1941. Upon graduation, Leo wanted to attend Lincoln School of Commerce but his folks didn't have the money so he learned he could go to Bellevue NYA School, a government school. Stub Moor and Roy Hall, his buddies, weren't interested but two weeks later, here came Roy and Ray Hall and Stub. He received his room and board plus \$10.80 a month and his training as a machinist helper. He planned to go to Seattle but Martin Bomber Plant needed machinists so they went, where they met Heidtbrink who soon became a lifelong friend. He became a milling machine operator that produced the B26 Bomber. His starting wage was 50¢ an hour. Living in a boarding house with Stub and Heidtbrink his meals included a hamburger steak for 98¢ at Nash Café. Leo bought a new rifle and was so proud of it. He went around Omaha and shot grasshoppers. Heidtbrink sent him a letter that the military needed rifles and would return it after the war. So Leo took the gun apart and put his name on it, put it back together and was ready to give it to the military when it turned out that it was all a joke. After about a year he decided to enlist in the Army Air Corp. He was sworn in the Air Corp 12.9.1942 at Fort Crook, NE, went to Leavenworth Kansas for military clothes and then to St. Petersburg, Florida for training. He trained in Lincoln for Air Craft mechanics, Chaunte Field, Illinois for engine specialist, Lowry Field, Denver Colorado to take machine guns apart and to fuse bombs. He was stationed in Saline Kansas at Smokey Hill Base, then overseas on USS Mt Vernon ship to Bombay, India. Leo took a train to Karagpur and Calcutta, India. He went to China on an assignment, was in India about a year, then flew to Tinian, Guam and Saipan and flew over enemy territory. He was in Tinian when the Atomic bomb was dropped. He served almost 3 years and was discharged in Lincoln on 10.24.1945 with the rank of Staff Sergeant. He received a Good Conduct Metal, Presidential Unit Citation and Asiatic Pacific Ribbon with 6 battle stars.

Returning home, he helped his father farm while the fall and winters he worked for Jerry Betka dragging roads, Joe Matejka-carpenter helper, Dick Williford-mechanic and parts

man, Daniels and Bush in Milligan picking up cream, eggs and poultry in the country and surrounding towns and for Babe Duba-cut up car bodies.

Leo met his wife of 44 years at a dance in Burrell NE. The courtship lasted 1½ years and they married 2.9.1951. They made their home on a farm 2½ miles north of Milligan. To this union two boys were born, Kenneth and Richard. Leo and Ella Mae loved to travel and did so with their sons. They attended many of Leo's China, Berma, India and Air Force reunions. Leo retired in 1988 from farming and spent many winters in south Texas "The Valley". After retiring he worked for Albert Kaiser and Roy Hall. Leo received his 50 year pin for the ZCJB Lodge and a 50+ member of Post #240 American Legion of Milligan, permanent member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7102 of Geneva, a permanent member of the Nations and State CBI Veterans Organization, Member of the 20th Air Force and of the 58th Bomb Wing Veterans Association.

After Ella Mae passed away Leo spent his time fishing with his grandsons, Cody and Kirby and attending their ballgames and events when he was not in wintering in southern Texas. Leo loved to dance and he met the two loves of his life on the dance floor, Ella Mae Svec Soukup and Verona Wallace. His nephew, Ernie Luksik, held a special place in his heart as he became his driver to Texas and took care of him this winter while in "The Valley". Leo was preceded in death by his parents; wife Ella Mae, sisters Viola Luksik and 2 infant sisters; 4 brother-in-laws; 4 sister-in-laws and Grandson Drew Soukup.

He is survived by son & wife Ken & Lisa Soukup of Exeter, son & wife Richard & Denise Soukup of Valparaiso, NE, grandsons Cody & Kirby of Exeter, step-granddaughter & husband Sarah and TJ McGee of Urbandale, IA, step-grandson & wife Shane and Stacey Murray of Gulf Port, MS and step-grandson Lee Murray of Valparaiso, NE; step-great grandchildren Connor Murray and Anna McGee; brother-in-law Alfred Krupicka of Friend, nieces, nephews and a host of other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were conducted from the Farmer Funeral Home in Exeter, Nebraska on Saturday, March 9, 2013, with Kim Dunker officiating. Musical selections for the service were, "Make Someone Happy" and "Winter Texan." Casket bearers were Ernie Luksik, Allen Zumpfe, Neal Filipi, David Krupicka, Steve Rhodes and Lee Murray. Military graveside services were provided by the Milligan American Legion HSSK Post #240 at the Exeter Cemetery. Memorials are directed to the Milligan or Exeter American Legion or the Geneva VFW. Farmer Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

JN

“ Rich and Kenny sorry to hear about your dad passing. I lost my mom last October 4, 2010 from cancer and this morning I lost my nephew from a car accident in this storm. I always enjoyed working with Rich over the years you guys are in my prayers. Take Care! Jackie Noxon

Jackie Noxon - March 10, 2013 at 05:03 PM

JD

“ We send you our sympathy in the loss of your father and grandfather. Leo was one of the kindest men we knew. John always enjoyed their visits about fishing and who was catching what and where. Our thoughts are with you.

John and Carol Dumpert - March 08, 2013 at 11:42 AM

AW

“ And He will wipe out every tear from their eyes and death will be no more. I was deeply saddened by the passing of Leo. He was a kind soul that I was lucky to have met. Leo was my mother in law's special friend and seeing them together was something special. I witnessed that during her final days. I find comfort in knowing that they are together once again. I know that they are dancing. My condolences to Leo's family at this difficult time. My thoughts are with you all.

Amy Wallace - March 07, 2013 at 06:42 PM

NM

“ I was so saddened to hear of Leo's passing. Leo really was one of the "good guys": he had such a positive attitude regardless of the curveballs life threw him. When he smiled it lit up his eyes and you couldn't help but feel better around him. He brought a lot of caring and happiness to mom her last years and I will always be thankful God brought him into her life. My sincere condolences to his family he will be missed.

Nancy McIlvaine - March 07, 2013 at 03:04 PM

JW

“ I was very saddened to learn of Leo's passing. My condolences to Leo's family and friends. He will no doubt be missed by many. I know I enjoyed getting to know him!

Leo was my mother's companion for the last few years of her life, and she cared for him very much. When mom was ill and passed last spring, the affection Leo had for mom was clear, and he and his family were very gracious and supportive during that very difficult period.

Rest in peace, Leo.

John Wallace - March 07, 2013 at 12:11 PM