



Elmer T. Compas

May 14, 2010

Elmer Theon Compas, 85, of Cape Girardeau passed away Friday, May 14, 2010, at the Missouri Veterans Home. He was born July 26, 1924, in Oran, Mo., to Leo and Clara Diebold Compas, but spent most of his formative years growing up in Cape Girardeau. He was married to Bonnie E. Spinney on May 27, 1978, in Anaheim, Calif., for 32 years. He was the middle child of nine siblings. He attended school at St. Mary's, including the old St. Mary's High School. As a teenager, he helped to pay for his schooling by delivering newspapers for Cape News, worked at Rigdon Laundry delivering laundry, as a stockboy at a drug store where the Subway is now on Broadway, and at a frozen food locker and butcher shop. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II as a communications officer in a tank division in the European Theatre of Operations. He again served our country as a trainer during the Korean War. Between his military service periods he completed an engineering degree at the University of Missouri School of Mines and Metallurgy in Rolla, Mo. He was employed for a time as a surveyor for the U.S. Geological Survey, but then began a long career in the aircraft and aerospace industries as an engineer and manager in manufacturing, engineering and quality assurance. He was also employed for a few years in the medical device industry. He moved around the country for his various employers, living in Florida, California, Missouri and Maryland. While employed with McDonnell Douglas, he was sent to Australia to work for a few years. He traveled for pleasure as well as for employment and was proud of having visited all 50 states. He also

visited many foreign countries during his lifetime. He lived in Southern California for many years, and spent much of his leisure time with his best buddy, Jack Marshall. Together they went on many freshwater fishing expeditions and they sang together in the California Promise (Barbershop) Chorus that competed regionally and nationally. After their retirements, they lunched together every weekday and swapped popular novels. Elmer kept himself fit by visiting the YMCA in the mornings and walking a mile in the neighborhood in the evenings. He moved from California back to Cape Girardeau in 2004 to be near the large community of Compas family members, and enjoyed participating in Compas social events. Elmer and Ray did some fishing locally as well as lunching together almost every weekday. He was of the Catholic faith and member of the VFW. Survivors include his wife, Bonnie E. Compas of Cape Girardeau; a daughter, Patricia (Steve) Goetze of San Rafael, Calif.; two sons, Michael L. Compas of Costa Mesa, Calif., and Mark W. Compas of Marysville, Wash.; a grandchild, Alicia Goetzep; four sisters, Lucille Waters of Orleans, Mass., Rita Yarborough and Bernice Glass, both of Cape Girardeau and Clara Cruickshank of Orlando, Fla.; a brother, Vernon (Elwanda) Compas of Cape Girardeau; and a sister-in-law, Minnie Compas of Jackson. He was preceded in death by parents; a sister, Betty Henley; and two brothers, Leo and Ray Compas. Visitation will be from 4 to 7 p.m. Monday, May 17, 2010 at Ford and Sons Mount Auburn Chapel, with parish prayers at 6 p.m. followed by a memorial by Gerald Compas of Houston. The funeral will be at 11 a.m. Tuesday, May 18, 2010 at St. Mary Catholic Church, with the Rev. David Hulshof officiating. Flag folding and presentation will be at the church by the Missouri Honor Team. Memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society.