






Francis E. "Gene" Rhodes

December 16, 2014

Francis Eugene ♦Gene♦ Rhodes, 88, of Cape Girardeau peacefully passed away Dec. 16, 2014, at Chateau Girardeau surrounded by daughters. He was born on July 24, 1926, in Toga, Missouri, eldest son of the late Helen (Zimmer) and Asa Rhodes. Raised in a humble upbringing, he was one of seven children. On Nov. 24, 1948, he married Edvira A. Messmer at St. Augustine Catholic Church in Kelso, Missouri. He was drafted into the Army in November 1944 and subsequently graduated early from Advance High School that December. He served twice in the U.S. Army (7th Infantry Division) on Okinawa in the South Pacific Theatre during World War II as a master sergeant, and at Letterman Army Hospital in San Francisco during the Korean Conflict. Following his discharge, he attended Steimle Business College. He was employed 10 years by R.B. Potashnick Construction Company, where, in his words, he received ♦the best education possible.♦ He held Mr. Potashnick in high esteem and spent the remainder of his life emulating a charitable spirit ♦paying it forward♦ not only for family but untold others. Before founding Rhodes Oil Companies in 1963, he was a commissioned delivery salesman for Gulf Oil Corporation. He embarked on his career as an oil jobber, providing fuel to independent retail service stations and farmers throughout the area. Over time, he expanded his oil company into the gasoline retail market, establishing Rhodes Pump-Ur-Own self-service gas stations that would later become Rhodes 101 Convenience stores. During his career in the petroleum industry, he held many positions of leadership at the

state level and served on various national committees. He served as mayor of Cape Girardeau from 1986 to 1994, in addition to extensive civic activities related to commerce and growth in the Southeast Missouri area. He also served from 1996 to 2002 on the board of directors of The Bank of Missouri, where his support and encouragement vastly influenced the expansion and success of the bank. He was a devout Catholic, and was a member of St. Vincent de Paul Parish for more than 50 years, where he generously served with his time, talent and benevolent spirit. He was chairman of St. Vincent Parish Council for four years during which time the new St. Vincent de Paul Church was built, along with the Parish Center addition to the school. He is survived by his six daughters, Patricia (Gary Lynch) Bratton, Teresa (Jim) Maurer and Suzie (Jim) Vickery of Cape Girardeau; and Carla (Craig) Millham, Bonnie (Roger) Poythress and Elaine (Brad) Beussink of Jackson. He is also survived by 21 beloved grandchildren and 31 great-grandchildren (with one  on the way ). He is also survived by one brother, Donald (Sandy) Rhodes of Dexter, Missouri. He was preceded in death by his wife, Edvira; an infant granddaughter; his parents; four sisters; and one brother. Visitation will be from 4 to 8 p.m. Thursday with parish prayers at 7:00PM and again from 1 to 2 p.m. Friday at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church. Funeral Mass will be 2 p.m. Friday at the church, with the Rev. David Hulshof officiating. Burial with full military honors will be performed at St. Mary s Cemetery in Cape Girardeau. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Birthright, the American Cancer Society and Wounded Warriors.

Tribute Wall

AB

“ *Saddened by your passing but truly believe you are in a place of eternal joy.*

Adrian Bratcher - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JJ

“ *Just learned that Mr. Rhodes had passed away and I am very sorry for your great loss. Your Dad was always kind and generous with his time. As a youngster growing up across the street, I have many fond memories of your family.*

Jim Jansen - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

BK

“ *Gene used to come in my office and "hide" as he would say. by turning off his pager and phone. Gene once told me "you have to do well here on earth, because you will answer to the Good Lord above. I appreciated and loved the conversation. Gene, WELL DONE !! Prayers for you and your family.*

Barry Knight. - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

CL

“ *Dear Rhodes Family: We are sending you our heartfelt condolences for the loss of your father, grandfather and friend. Words cannot express the loss of a father. He will live on in the many memories he helped you create. He was a kind soul and had a big heart for those whom he encountered. May he live on thru each of you. With sympathy, Cheryl and Jim Lawrence*

Cheryl and Jim Lawrence - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DF

“ Gene will be missed and forever in our hearts.

Dennis and Leta Fisher - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DB

“ Worked at Rhodes Sunset while in college. He was a great friend for life and I will be forever grateful for all he taught me, and his help while I was in school. I was able to repay in a small measure when he was Mayor. My sympathies.

Dan Bollinger - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

GS

“ Mr. Rhodes was always a kind and gentle man--he always thought the best and gave everyone a chance to prove themselves. His kindness and generosity will never be forgotten. Rest in Peace, Mr. Rhodes!!

georgia smith - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

TL

“ Jim & Teresa, My sincere condolence to you and the family. I always enjoyed discussing the oil business with Gene as I would stop to talk when I was in Cape.

Tim Lyles - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

DH

“ To the Rhodes family: My family extends our sympathy to each and everyone of you. Your family are in our thoughts and prayers. May God will be with you all. The Hale family: Rodney, Diane, and Brooke

Diane Hale - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ I am sorry that Mr. Rhodes has passed on. I so much appreciated his help and support for the Teen Challenge International of Mid-America capital campaign in the 90's. He was also helpful to Teen Challenge at other times. He was a very down to earth man with a heart to help those in need. May God bless and comfort your family at this time.

Jack Smart - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

BW

“ We will always have fond memories of the Perolator trips with Aunt Edvira and Uncle Gene. Mom always stayed very close to the two of them and I know how much she loved them both. We send our condolences to all.

Bill and Kay Whittaker - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

FK

“ Sorry to hear the bad news about such a great and wonderful person. Please accept my sympathy.

Felix Kinsley - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

CL

“ We grieve the loss of our kinsman & friend, with a heavy heart & an empty space in our lives. But sometimes we need to realize that letting go so as to allow them to enter into God's Kingdom where angels thrive & serve the Lord is the last & best wish of us all. God bless Gene for the many things he's done in his life that have surely made his family proud. With love & respect, Carrie

Carrie Little - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

CI

“ I was saddened to hear of the loss of a very dear and generous man. Gene was my Godfather but after moving to California 28 years ago I lost touch, I am sad to say. My mother, Glenda (Nelle and Leonard Dalton's daughter), who has passed also, loved Godfather Gene very much. I am keeping all of you in my prayers.

Carla Ingmire - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

MB

“ My deeepst sympathy in the loss of your father and grandfather. Prayers for peace and God's blessings. Marcia

Marcia (Welker) Bliss - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

LP

“ I'm so sorry to hear of your loss.

Lynda Pauley - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

RG

“ Patty, I'm so sorry to read of your daddy' passing. He was a wonderful man and a real credit to the community of Cape. I think of you often and the great experiences we had in the counseling program at SEMO. Give my regrets and best wishes to your family.
Ron

Ron Gray - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

WS

“ So sorry for the loss of a great man. Sorry we can't be up there but know that our prayers are with the entire family. Willie St.Pierre

Willie & Penny St.Pierre - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

LE

“ *Sending our thoughts and prayers to your family during this time of sorrow. Gene was a good man who always had a smile on his face for us and took the time to ask how things were going.*

Larry & Betty Essner - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ *i always liked your Mom and Dad. I am sorry to hear of his death.*

Shirley Seabaugh - May 12, 2015 at 12:00 AM