



JOHN FRANCIS "CHICK" SMERUD

August 29, 2015

John Francis 'Chick' Smerud, 90, of New Albin, Iowa passed away peacefully in his sleep at ThortonManor in Lansing, Iowa on August 29, 2015. He was born to Oscar and Clara (Wilde) Smerud and raised on a farm outside of New Albin. He was one of eleven children Sara, Edmund, Rosemary, Evangeline, Margaretta, Rita, George, Donald, Alfred and Clara-Louise. John attended country school and New Albin High School. It was at a friend's gathering that he met a young woman named Rita Lyons. They married on November 29, 1947.

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> They farmed for 10 years on English Bench, rural Allamakee County, Iowa. Then John and Rita moved to Jefferson Ridge, Houston County, Minnesota, where they farmed successfully for 37 years while raising their family. They were honored to be Houston County Conservation Farmers of the Year. As they took a picture of them in the field, John quipped, 'Looks like we are outstanding in our field.'

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> John was honored to be a part of the Freedom Flight to Washington D.C. He was a member of the VFW and American Legion and was proud of his time in service of our country in the army during WWII.

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> He was a quiet man, deferential, and unassuming. His accomplishments made no headlines. He was the man who left space for you to change lanes in

traffic. He was the man who added generously to the tip jar when no one was looking. He was the man who made your job a little easier or your day a little brighter but never took credit for it.

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> In retirement, John and Rita cherished traveling to see their children and grandchildren. They enjoyed their penny and nickel slots during their several trips to Las Vegas, euchre tournaments they had during family visits, and socializing with their many friends. As a remarkably devoted husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather, John was active in church and community, and a member of St. Joseph Catholic Church. He will be deeply missed by all.

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> John lives on in the hearts, minds, and bodies of his five children: Thomas (Ann) Smerud of Greeley Colorado; Michael (Randi) Smerud of Dallas, Texas; Scott (Theresa) Smerud of LaCrosse, Wisconsin; Mary (Greg) Hejlik of Bonita Springs, Florida and Kara Smerud of Caledonia, Minnesota. Grandchildren: Brian (Jennifer) Smerud, Patrick (Megan) Smerud, Kevin and Alison Smerud; Katie and Matthew Smerud; Anna (Smerud) Taylor (Michael), Aidan, Quinlan, Kristian, and Emma Smerud; Melissa (Hejlik) Kodani (Stacy), Nicole (Hejlik) Gomez (Carlos), Eric Hejlik, Great Grandchildren: Braden, Adelyn, and Raymond Smerud: Amelia Kodani, Ian and Ayla Gomez, and a very dear friend, Belva Becker. He is further survived by two brothers Alfred (Lorna) Smerud of LaCrosse, and Donald Smerud of Waukon; a brother-in-law Francis (Joyce) Lyons and two sisters-in-law Theresa Lyons of Waukon and Betty Zischke of LaCrosse; plus numerous nieces and nephews.

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> John was preceded in death by his parents; his wife Rita; a son Frances John; a grandson Greg Hejlik Jr.; two brothers, Edmund Smerud and George Smerud, and six sisters, Sara, Rosemary, Evangeline, Margaretta, Rita, and Clara-Louise.

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> A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at St. Joseph Catholic Church in New

Albin on Wednesday, September 9, 2015, with visitation from 9:30 a.m. until services begin at 11:00 a.m. The Rev. Fr. John Moser will officiate. Inurnment with military honors will be in the St. Joseph Cemetery, New Albin