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LOY THOMAS STINNETT



Loy Thomas Stinnett, 82, entered eternal life at 10:25 a.m. on Dec. 6, 2008, at the Mesilla Valley Hospice, La Posada. Tommie was born on May 11, 1926, in Chewey, Okla., to Laurence Thomas Stinnett and Juanita Jordan Stinnett, the eldest son of four children.

On Oct. 17, 1944, during World War II, Tommie was inducted into the U.S. Army as a private first class, serving in the 753rd Anti-aircraft Artillery Gun Battalion on Okinawa, and later in post-war Japan. His unit was part of the occupational army in Japan during the Asiatic-Pacific Theater Campaign. He was honorably discharged on Nov. 24, 1946. After his service to his country, he married his wife, Ellen Marie Elgin, in Detroit, Mich. Tommie and Marie were happily married for 57 years.

For 37 years, Tommie lived and worked in California as a pipefitter for the Texaco Refinery in Wilmington before retiring in 1988. Over the years, he continued to maintain friendships with his many co-workers, who respected him highly for his work ethic and for his skills in the field. In 1992, soon after his retirement, he and Marie moved to Las Cruces.

Tommie was a quiet and reserved man, who held strong beliefs when it

came to his family and country. As a young man, he showed great skill in hunting, carpentry and in being a "Mr. Fix-it" around the house. He is fondly remembered sitting on the back porch steps conversing in the Cherokee language with his own father. In the early quiet of a Sunday morning, he could be found gardening or feeding doughnuts to his beagle, Sam.

After raising his family, he began taking guitar lessons and enjoying his time practicing with his guitar buddy, Gary Anderson. He was an active member in many of the local dance clubs, especially the Big Band Dance Club, the Blue Bells, and the Swingin' Seniors at the Munson Senior Center. He spent many joyful hours square dancing with his wife, Marie, and all of his friends, and he continued to "kick up his heels" to the very end of his life.

Tommie was preceded in death by his wife, Ellen Marie, and his parents. He is survived by his daughter, Ellen Christine Stinnett-Martinez, and husband, Ruben; his son, Gary Thomas Stinnett; his granddaughter, Crystal Fire Martinez; his sister, Elva Marie Tyler and husband, D. A.; and other family members, all of Las Cruces. He also leaves behind his brother, Leo Stinnett, and wife, Virginia; his sister, Zelda Scott; and numerous family members in Texas, Oklahoma and California. He will be missed by his many friends, including the staff of the Mesilla Valley Hospice, who provided him with such loving care. He enjoyed his life, and he valiantly "fought the good fight." He has now found the green pasture and dwells peacefully in the house of the Lord.

Visitation for Tommie will begin at 9 a.m. on Dec. 12, 2008, at La Paz-Graham's Funeral Home Chapel, 555 W. Amador Ave., Las Cruces. Family and friends will join together to celebrate the funeral service at 10 a.m. on Dec. 12, 2008, in the funeral home chapel. Interment services will follow at Hillcrest Memorial Gardens Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, it is asked that memorial contributions be made in Tommie's name to the Mesilla Valley Hospice, La Posada, here in Las Cruces. All service arrangements have been entrusted to the care of La Paz-Graham's Funeral Home. To send condolences, go to www.lapaz-grahams.com.



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