



Donald Lee Smith

March 3, 1923 - April 28, 2018

Donald L. Smith, of Turlock, passed away peacefully in his sleep on Saturday surrounded by his family. He was 95.

Don was born in Oakland to Charles L. Smith, Jr. and Mattie M. (Worthington) Smith, both originally from Oregon. The Smith family moved to Turlock in 1926 when Charles purchased the local Chevrolet dealership. At age 14, Don went to the first National Boy Scout Jamboree in Washington, D. C. He attended Interdale High School in Palo Alto where he graduated with high marks.

In 1941, Don entered Stanford University as a freshman where he met the love of his life, Elizabeth (Betty) Kenney. His studies at Stanford were interrupted with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the United States entry into World War II, after which he enlisted and became a pilot in the Army Air Corps. He was assigned to the Air Transport Command where he was stationed at Prestwick, Scotland. With the end of the war in Europe, Don returned to Stanford, completing his studies and graduating in 1947.

On Nov. 16, 1945, Don and Elizabeth were married. After both graduated from Stanford, they moved to Turlock where Don entered the family Chevrolet dealership and started his own family. The couple had four children – Kathleen Smith (Santorini), Marcia Smith (Gordon), Lee Smith and Larry Smith.

Don and Betty were devoted and adventurous parents - frequently packing up the family for camping trips in the Sierras and throughout the Western United States and Baja, CA. Later in life, Don enjoyed organizing family trips to

Alaska, Tahiti, and La Paz, Mexico. Don and Betty traveled through much of Europe, Africa and the Middle East, Asia, and South America, as well as Canada and Mexico.

Don loved the outdoors and loved fishing and duck hunting. Most Wednesday and Saturday mornings during duck season, Don would join his friends at the “duck club” for a morning hunt. He also loved game hunting, hunting in Africa several times and hunting deer and elk with his sons and grandsons.

Don was a successful businessman. He loved the auto business and all the customers and employees he met and worked with throughout the years. Even after his retirement, he could be found nearly every day in his office at the dealership. He was greatly admired and loved by his fellow employees and his longtime customers.

He also believed in giving back to his community and was involved in many organizations, which include: Turlock Exchange Club, Saturday Knife & Fork Club, Stanislaus State Advisory Committee, Emanuel Hospital Advisory Committee, Turlock Memorial Park and Funeral Home Board, and the Turlock Salvation Army Board. He was involved in the Salvation Army for decades and nearly every year helped organize the Christmas Kettle drives.

Don is preceded in death by his parents, Charles and Mattie Smith, and his sister Charlotte Warren. He’s survived by his wife Elizabeth (Betty) Smith; his four children – Kathleen Santorini, Marcia (Jim) Gordon, Lee (Carlene) Smith and Larry (Candy) Smith; his 7 grandchildren – Marie Clarke, Ed “Dobby” Clarke, Laurel Shnider, Jeff Gordon, Gretchen Gordon, Erin Cuarenta and Kristi Cuarenta, and by his 9 great-grandchildren.

Don’s family wishes to thank the many members of our community for their generous support and kindness. Memorial donations may be made to Turlock Salvation Army, 893 Lander Ave., Turlock, CA 95380 or CovenantCare Hospice, 125 N. Broadway, Turlock, CA 95380.

A visitation will be held from 4 to 7 p.m. on Friday, May 4, at Turlock Funeral Home. Funeral services will be conducted at 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 5, at the same location. The committal services will follow at Turlock Memorial Park.

Cemetery Details

Turlock Memorial Park

575 N. Soderquist Rd.
Turlock, CA 95380
(209) 632-9111
<http://turlockmemorialpark.com>

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 4. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (PT)

Turlock Funeral Home
425 North Soderquist Road
Turlock, CA 95381
(209) 632-9111
<https://turlockfuneralhome.com>

Funeral Service

MAY 5. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (PT)

Turlock Funeral Home
425 North Soderquist Road
Turlock, CA 95381
(209) 632-9111
<https://turlockfuneralhome.com>

Interment following Funeral Service

MAY 5. 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (PT)

Turlock Memorial Park
575 N Soderquist Rd
Turlock, CA 95380-3749
(209) 632-9111

Tribute Wall



“ *Donald Lee Smith*

January 28, 2023 at 09:01 AM