



Rex B. Funnell

JUL 10, 1916 - JUN 5, 2015



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Rex B. Funnell, 98 and 11/12ths, sank his final putt on June 5, 2015. He was born to the late Ray and Rebecca (Ainger) Funnell on July 10, 1916 and lived his entire life in Whitehall, Michigan. On June 11, 1937, Rex married his high school sweetheart, Bertha Jane King. She preceded him in death on July 19, 1999 after 62 years of marriage. Rex graduated from Whitehall High School in 1933 at the age of 16. He was too young to pursue a factory job at that time, so worked in the local A&P grocery store, as well as his Granddad Ainger's Meat Market in Whitehall. From 1937-1940 he worked at the Eagle Ottawa Leather Company and from 1940-1943 he worked at Continental Motors in Muskegon. Rex was a member of The Greatest Generation and joined with the brave men and women who served our nation during WWII. In 1943 he became a proud member of the United States Army 71st Infantry Division. He and his Company were among those who liberated concentration camps in Austria. In September 2004, Rex took a memorable and emotional trip to Washington DC with his grandson Tim, to visit the new WWII Memorial and the Holocaust Museum. When he returned from the war, Rex went to Barber College after which he began working alongside his dad at Funnell's Barber Shop in downtown Whitehall. He retired from the Barber Shop in 1979 but didn't retire from "barbering" until much later! Rex loved his barbering days in Whitehall and treasured being reminded by many that he had cut their hair in their youth. Rex was very quick-witted, always ready with a "comeback" and had a wonderful sense of humor. Those who knew him will remember how many times he brought a smile to their faces. After retiring, Rex and Bertha became "Winter Texans" in Mercedes, Texas. While in Mercedes, Rex would "set up shop" on the patio of his mobile home and guys would line up every Wednesday for a haircut! He continued this practice until he turned 92 at which point his children convinced him to leave his barber tools in Whitehall! Rex was a proud "Winter Texan" for 33 years as he continued to



travel there even after Bert's passing. Rex loved sports. In high school he was an accomplished three-sport athlete. After graduation, he continued with basketball as a member of the Black Eagles basketball team (1933-1940) that was sponsored by the Eagle Ottawa Leather Company. After he returned from the war, Rex played baseball for years for the Whitehall Sunday Independent Baseball League. While working at the Barber Shop he continued his involvement with sports, by re-living each game (particularly the Whitehall Vikings games) play-by-play with whoever was captive in his chair! Several folks would stop in the shop on the day after a game just to hear the Barber Shop talk! Many will remember hearing his voice over the loudspeaker on Friday nights in the Fall, as Rex also announced the Vikings football games" first at Funnell Field where he ran up and down the sidelines with his microphone and later in the new press box at the High School Football Stadium. He was very proud of being the recipient of the WHS Sports Hall of Fame Service Award in 2012. Rex was an avid golfer. His interest in golfing began in 1928 when he started caddying at the White Lake Golf Club at the age of 12. He continued his love of the game, playing at White Lake, until the age of 95. He was very proud of the 8 holes-in-one he had in his lifetime " 7 at White Lake and 1 in Texas. He had at least one on each of the 4 Par 3's at White Lake (Grand Slam), as well as one on #17, which is a Par 4. In 2006, Rex was elected an honorary member of the White Lake Golf Club. Rex was a life member and Past Master of Montague-Whitehall Lodge 198, F life member of White Lake Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 3214; life member of Algot Johnson American Legion Post #69; member of Montague VFW Post 3256; life member 71st Division, 608th HQ BTRY United States Army, and life member Disabled American Veterans. Rex also served on the Whitehall School Board for many years. Rex was a great dad, grandpa, great-grandpa, uncle, cousin, and friend. He was a true gentleman and will be missed and remembered beyond words by his children: Rex King (Dolores Browndorf) Funnell, Marcia Rae (Jim Runyan) Funnell, and Robert Bryce (Robin) Funnell; 5 Grandchildren: Jeffrey, Timothy (Erin), Michael, Ryan (Jennifer), and Matthew (Rachel); 6 Great-Grandchildren: Conner, Cayla, Austin, Noah, Joslynn, and Stella. Grampy will also be greatly missed by Goliath, his beloved furry companion. Megan, Lizzie, Bradley and Lil, who lovingly named him Paka Rex, will miss their



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yearly summer sojourn with him at his wonderful lake house on his beloved White Lake. Many others who had the privilege of spending time with Rex on the deck of his lake house will also miss him. Rex loved his family. He loved his community. He loved his fellowman. The family would like to extend a special thanks to the wonderful people at Harbor Hospice, as well as all the others that helped us make Dad's transition very comforting and peaceful. A memorial celebration of Rex's life will be held at Buzz's Lakeside Inn, 5700 N. Scenic Dr., Whitehall, MI on Saturday, September 5, 2015 from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. In lieu of flowers, the family would appreciate contributions be made to Harbor Hospice, 1050 W. Western Avenue, Suite 400, Muskegon, MI 49441.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Rex by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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