

Henry Cruz

Fairmont City | Monday, April 1 2024

Henry Cruz, 89, died at 5:00 a.m. Monday, April 1, 2024, at his home in Alton. Henry was born in Fairmont City on July 14, 1934. He was the sixth child out of eleven born to Ysidro and Carlotta (Soto) Cruz. He remained in Fairmont City until the age of ten when the family moved to Wapato, Washington. At the age of 15, he began to work in the farm fields of Washington State to provide for his siblings. Years later at the age of 21, entered the U.S. Air Force where he was assigned to Parks Air Force Base for basic training. After leaving basic training he was stationed in various Air Force Bases such as Chanute, Larson, and Charleston. While in the Air Force, he earned his GED.



Soon after leaving the Air Force in 1959, he returned to Fairmont City where he met his future wife, Juanita Gonzales. They met at the Mexican Dance Hall where they danced, dated, fell in love, and where they became engaged and married in the same year. The very same year, he began working at Laclede Steel.

Henry always took an interest in keeping his yard clean and cut along with keeping his vehicles washed and pristine. He was always known to tell his children to check their oil frequently, which became a family joke.

He was an avid sports fan, especially a devoted Cardinals fan. It was very common to hear the ballgame on the radio while he was outside grilling for his family or have the ballgame playing on the TV when you entered the living room.

His love of sports carried on into his Air Force years where he played on various basketball and softball teams. After leaving the service, he continued to play on various Mexican and Laclede Steel softball teams. Eventually, he became a pitcher for The Patriots and other slow and fast-pitch teams.

He also played on league-sponsored basketball teams where his signature Hook shot made him a standout amongst his fellow ball players.

He is survived by his wife, Juanita, children, Michael (Linda) Cruz of Alton, Daniel Cruz of Bethalto, Connie St. Peters of St. Louis, Julie (Matt) Weiner of Jerseyville, and Ken (Kristin) Cruz of Bethalto, grandchildren, Trisha Cruz (Brock Smith), Kelsey (Tyler) Hawkins, Morgan (Kyle) Deardeuff, Alex St. Peters (Elizabeth Hawkins), Juliana Weiner (Jonathan Siddell), Emily Cruz, Zach Weiner and Abby Cruz, and great-grandchildren, Kaden Hawkins, Jackson Hawkins, Rainah Deardeuff, Vada Hawkins, Weston Haley, and Rylah Deardeuff. Also surviving are his siblings, Lola Douglas, Gloria Davis, and Nancy Comstock.

Along with his parents, he was preceded in death by his siblings, Mary Quintana, Tomasa (Mattie) Moralez, Lino Cruz, Ysidro (Chito) Cruz, Robert (Bobby) Cruz, Anthony (Tony) Cruz, and Manuel Cruz.

Visitation will be from 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Sunday, April 7, 2024 at Gent Funeral Home in Alton. A Mass of Christian burial will be at noon on Monday, April 8, 2024, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Alton. Burial will be at St. Joseph's Cemetery. Memorials may be made to Autismspeaks.org in the name of Abby Cruz, his granddaughter. The family would like to thank BJC Hospice for their care and support during this time. Online guestbook and information may be found at www.gentfuneralhome.com.