

Thomas Erwin

Jerseyville | Sunday, March 17 2013

Thomas Lee Erwin, 63. lost his four and half year long battle with various forms of cancer on Sunday, March 17, 2013 at 7:20 p.m. at his home with his wife and children by his side. Tom was born in Alton on July 6, 1949, the second of four sons born to Darward V. "Duke" and Viriginia L. "Jean" (Ghent) Erwin. Tom attended Alton Public Schools, graduating from Alton Senior High School in 1967. While in school, Tom participated in various sports as well as band and theatrical productions. Tom attended SIUE briefly before enlisting with the U.S. Army Signal Corp., where he served his country from 1969 until 1971 with a one year tour in Northern Germany on a NATO missile site. After his honorable discharge, Tom went to work on a Cooperative Education Program between SIUE and Alton Box Board Co. in Alton where he alternated quarters of school and work. After much dedication of work and night school, Tom graduated from SIUE with a BS in Business Administration in 1975. It was that same year, that he married his high school sweetheart, Kathleen "Kathy" Schwartz. The two were married on Aug. 29, 1975 in Godfrey, and have enjoyed 37 1/2 years together and have been blessed with two beautiful children, Christopher & Katie. Tom continued working for Alton Box Board, ultimately as General Manager of the Rossville, Ga. paper cone manufacturing facility. In 1978, Tom and Kathy returned to the Alton area, when Tom accepted a position as Plant Manager for Tubular Steel Inc.'s steel tubing warehouse and pipe yard facility in Staunton, IL. Tom continued working for TSI for the next 25 years helping to grow the company tenfold, buying or building an additional six distribution facilities around the country, and then managing those facilities as well. He retired in good health as Vice President of Operations in 2001, at which time, he and Kathy moved to the golf/resort community of Hilltop Lakes, Texas. Tom and Kathy's retirement years were filled with golf, travel, fellowship and volunteer work. While in Texas, Tom drove an ambulance for the Hilltop Lakes Volunteer Fire Department. In 2006, after beginning to accumulate grandchildren, Tom and Kathy returned to Illinois and settled in Jerseyville. They were former members of Lockhaven Country Club,



Hilltop Lakes Country Club and Westlake Country Club in Jerseyville. Upon returning to Illinois, Tom turned his volunteer work to helping local veterans. He regularly drove a van for the Veterans Assistance Commission of Jersey County (VAC) which provided transportation to local veterans to the two VA Medical Centers in St. Louis. He was a member of the American Legion Post 492 in Jerseyville and served as their Adjutant, a member of the AMVETS Post 267, where he was a former officer, and a member and former officer of the American Legion Post 492 Honor Guard providing military funerals to local veterans. Additionally, he served as a commissioner for the VAC. With all that, Tom's true love was his family and spending as much time with them as possible. Surviving are his wife, Kathy Erwin of Jerseyville; his mother, Virginia "Jean" Erwin of Jerseyville; his two beloved children & their spouses, Christopher T. & Alicia Erwin and Katie B. and Josh Brunaugh all of Jerseyville; four grandchildren, Clayton "CJ" and Tanner "TJ" Brunaugh of Jerseyville, Kason Erwin of Fayette, Ar., and Eli Erwin of Jerseyville; two step grandchildren, Noah Behrmann of St. Louis and Julia Behrmann of Jerseyville; three brothers & sisters in law, David A. & Anne Erwin of Front Royal, Va., Steve P. & Phyllis Erwin of Godfrey, and Jeffery P. and Mary Erwin of Fosterburg; his Aunt "Bee", Vera Ghent of Jerseyville, along with a large number of nieces and nephews. Tom was very fond of his wife's family, "The Schwartz Clan" which included his mother in law, the late Kathleen "Granny" Schwartz; along with five brothers in law and their spouses, Charles and Jan Schwartz and Victor Schwartz all of Texas, Terry & Shelley Schwartz of Chicago, the late Randy & Vicki Schwartz of Godfrey, and Guy & Patty Schwartz of Alton, as well as one sister in law, Sylvia Parker of Alabama. Visitation will be from 3 to 8 p.m. Thursday at Crawford Funeral Home in Jerseyville. Funeral services will be conducted at 10 a.m. Friday at the Peace United Church of Christ in Jerseyville, with Rev. Theodore Engelsdorfer officiating. Burial will be in the Valhalla Memorial Park in Godfrey with full military rites conducted by the Jerseyville American Legion Post 492 Honor Guard. Memorials may be given to the Veterans Assistance Commission of Jersey County or to the Jerseyville American Legion Post 492 Honor Guard in care of Crawford Funeral Home.