



Joseph P. Kozak Sr.

August 1, 1928 - December 23, 2024

Joseph Paul Kozak, Sr., 96, passed away peacefully in his sleep on December 23, 2024, in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. Born on August 1, 1928, in Czechoslovakia, Joe immigrated to the United States in 1938 as a young boy, settling in Whiting, Indiana, with his father, Paul; his mother, Mary; and his sisters, Mary and Betty.

Joe built a life characterized by love, dedication, and positivity. After proudly serving two years in the Army, he and his wife, Patricia, raised five children in Highland, Indiana. Professionally, Joe found his calling in sales at Western & Southern Life Insurance, where his charm and diligence led to great success.

An avid golfer, Joe's passion for the game was evident in the countless hours he spent on the course and in his cherished memory of achieving a hole-in-one at Wicker Park Golf Course. His optimistic nature and warm demeanor left a lasting impression on everyone he met.

Joe is preceded in death by his sisters Mary Kasprzak and Betty Adams, his daughter Tricia Diamond, his son David, and his grandson, Jimmy Wells. He's survived by his wife, Patricia; his daughters Marianne Wells and Jeannie Ericsson; and his son Joseph Jr., along with 10 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren, and other family members and friends who will remember him fondly.

Joe is a remarkable man who embarked on his journey of sobriety 51 years ago. After more than half a century of living a life grounded in clarity and purpose, he transitioned from this world on his AA birthday. Joe was a beacon of wisdom and compassion, a guiding light teaching everyone who knew him the true essence of what matters in life.

Through his actions, he embodied selflessness, demonstrating how to give without expectation and embrace the joy in every moment. He encouraged others to be fully present, to engage with the world softly, peacefully, and with an acute awareness of living one day at a time.

Through his lived experience, Joe taught life's philosophy, "how we choose to approach our existence and interact with others," which truly defines our journey.

Per Joe's wishes, cremation will take place, and no memorial service will be held. Those who knew Joe are encouraged to honor his memory with a warm smile or a simple act of kindness in his name.

His life was a testament to optimism and resilience, and his legacy will live on in the hearts of those who loved him.

Burns Funeral Home & Crematory, Crown Point, IN, entrusted with arrangements. www.burnsfuneral.com