



Martin Smith

October 12, 1927 - April 7, 2023

After a courageous fight for his life, Martin gently slipped from the loving arms of his wife Jacqueline and family at his bedside, and into the arms of those who he had not seen for many, many years, including his beautiful mother Susanna, who died when he was just 4 years old.

At age 95, Marty had seen and done many things we could never imagine. In 1941 as a 14-year-old teen, he snuck onto an open train car, leaving his idyllic life and village home of Boian in Transylvania, Romania, to avoid being drafted by the armed forces of his country, a Nazi ally. All alone over the next four years, he survived on his wits, ingenuity and luck, evidenced by leaving home with just a few coins, some pastries and a slab of bacon. He made it through the perilous landscape of WWII and eventually landed in eastern France, working for the United States Army as a translator and mechanic, skills he picked up during his four-year journey through the war. France is where he met the love of his life, stepping up to a license bureau window to get tags for his motorcycle and into the life of the beautiful clerk who helped him that day. Though it took some persistence, she eventually fell in love with the handsome young man who would take her dancing every week. They were married in Bar-le-Duc, France on June 14, 1951 and began their life adventure together by risking everything on a boat ride across the Atlantic to North America.

During 71 years of marriage – some challenging, but by far wonderful times – they raised a family of two daughters. Marty provided for his family by working

as a mechanic, first opening his own car repair business in Merrillville, and then as a bus mechanic for Merrillville Community Schools and Portage Township Schools. He then landed at Amoco (later BP) in Whiting as a truck garage supervisor. He retired in 1992, and spent his long retirement fishing on his pontoon boat, playing his harmonica, gardening, picking fruits, distilling plum alcohol (a/k/a furniture varnish), traveling, taking rambling country drives in his beloved Cadillac Eldorado, complaining about the Cubs, more often than not losing at the casinos (although he did hit a few jackpots), and spending leisure-filled hours and holidays with his loving family.

Despite being tough as nails, Marty was a generous, fun-filled guy with a huge heart, and everyone who met him, simply liked him. He always had an interesting story to tell, a smile on his face, and loved to have his picture taken, any place, anytime.

Martin leaves behind his cherished wife and best friend, Jacqueline Smith, his loving daughters Rosemary Kusmiz-Brunette and Jackie (Cory) Webster. We would be remiss here not to say that Cory was like a son to Marty. He also leaves an amazing legacy of love and hope through his grandchildren – Michelle Pappas, Cortney Gulleon, Nathan (Jessica) Kusmiz, Molly Kusmiz, Noelle (Aaron) Webster-Milam, and Alexandra (Chris) Mislán – and great-grandchildren Zeke Mislán, Graysen Milam, Samantha Mislán, and Summer Roselynn Kusmiz arriving this August. Martin is also survived by his youngest sister- Maria (Rudy) Gross of Crown Point, and nephews. He is preceded in death by his father Thomas Schmidt, mother Susanna (Klein) Schmidt, great-grandchildren already in heaven, sister Regina (Martin) Muller of Germany, and nephew Ferdinand Gross. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Marty's memory to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital. A memorial visitation will be held on Saturday, April 22, 2023, from 1:00 p.m. until time of memorial service at 3:00 p.m. at Burns Funeral Home & Crematory, 10101 Broadway, Crown Point, IN, under the guidance of VNA Hospice Chaplain Ben Polhemus.

We would love for you to leave your stories about Marty on the Tribute Wall

here. Your condolences are heartfelt, but we would love to hear your memories of him above all else. www.burnsfuneral.com

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

APR **22**. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Burns Funeral Home & Crematory - Crown Point
10101 Broadway
Crown Point, IN 46307
(219) 769-0044
info@burnsfuneral.com
<https://www.burnsfuneral.com/>

Memorial Service

APR **22**. 3:00 PM (CT)

Burns Funeral Home & Crematory - Crown Point
10101 Broadway
Crown Point, IN 46307
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Tribute Wall



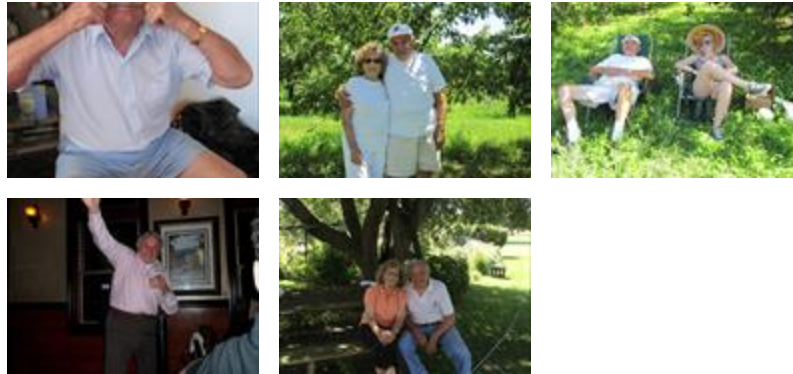
“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Martin Smith.*



April 19, 2023 at 04:10 PM



“ *The best grandpa and the best husband to his beautiful wife <3*



Molly - April 19, 2023 at 12:45 PM



“ *Our condolences to Rose and her family.*

Beautiful photos of a wonderful life with a wonderful family.

*Dr. Enrico Wensing and Team
St. Thomas Dental,
St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands*

Enrico Wensing - April 18, 2023 at 01:03 PM

DP

“ I feel like I've known the Smith family my entire life. Mr. Smith always took the time to talk and was such a kind gentleman. He was at his best when sharing a story. Deepest condolences to you all.

Dana Polomchak - April 11, 2023 at 04:10 PM

FS

Our deepest sympathy for the entire family. Marty was a great friend who enjoyed bowling. He drove a school bus to my brother's home when he heard the tragic news that Karl's wife and son were killed in a car/train accident. Marty Rest In Peace.

Fritz Schuller - April 11, 2023 at 08:58 PM

RK

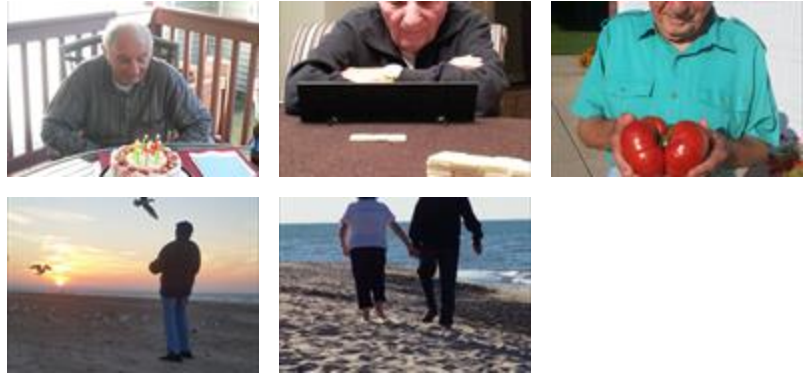
“ 12 files added to the tribute wall



Rosemary Kusmiz-Brunette - April 11, 2023 at 02:55 PM

JW

“ 66 files added to the album *Family Album*



Jackie Webster - April 11, 2023 at 02:39 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage* was purchased for the family of Martin Smith.



April 10, 2023 at 07:35 PM