

Gary H. Smith

October 21, 1934 ~ September 16, 2020

On September 16th, 2020, Gary H. Smith achieved what he had longed for: to be united once again with the love of his life, Helen. A self-made man of achievement, full of energy and zest for living well, Gary finally succumbed to the frailties of age and passed peacefully through the veil. He was nearly 86-years old.

While Gary is joyfully united once again with the three women who mattered most in his life; Helen, Drusa (the mother he lost at age 5 by an automobile accident) and Susan Cluff, his sixty-five year old Grandmother who raised him alone. Gary's growing posterity includes eight children, thirty-four grandchildren and another thirty-four great-grandchildren; and he is also survived by his brother, Farrell Smith.

Gary always looked on the bright side of life. Thinking or feeling ill towards others was not in his nature. He was generous and kind to a fault, always willing to help others in need with time and money. He possessed an indomitable spirit that featured great optimism for what can be possible to achieve in life; and he did achieve much.

He had little formal education, barely graduating from high school; only willing to finish because of his love of photography. (He used to explain to his Grandma that D's on his report card meant "Darn Good" and F's were "Fine.") Gary had no role models to follow. Money was not available in his youth. He cried once because Grandma couldn't afford to buy him a bicycle for $7.49. But Heaven smiled upon Gary.

He understood, innately, that to achieve in life he would have to become self-reliant. His life's path was marked with success in everything he attempted because of his altitude of attitude and hard work: from shining shoes and selling bubble gum to earn money as a child, to the paper route he started when he was 13 and worked for three years…to becoming the top staff photographer for the Los Angeles Times…then to the multi-million dollar Hacienda Heights Highlander and The Advertiser newspapers he built in southern California from scratch…and after that to the HealthRider business which sold hundreds of millions worth of exercise equipment.

A great salesman, Gary often said "selling is explaining, buying is understanding." But anyone who knows him will tell you that persistence was his stock in trade. He had what few men ever possess: he called it "sticktoitiveness." In all his work Gary wore a smile and showed by his efforts that he loved people. And they loved him back and believed in him. He was truly one-of-a-kind. Gary will be missed.

Gary served his country during the Korean war, stationed with Helen in Okinawa, Japan. Gary and Helen also served a church mission together in Micronesia, Guam.

A graveside service will be held at 11a on Saturday, September 26 at Larkin Sunset Gardens, 1950 E. Dimple Dell Road (10600 S.) in Sandy, Utah.