John Sonnenberg

April 11, 1922 ~ July 1, 2015

John Sonnenberg, 93, passed away peacefully on July 1, 2015 at his home in Salt Lake City, Utah, after a long, healthy and fulfilling life.

John was born on April 11, 1922 in Schneidemuehl, Germany to Otto Paul and Lucielle Mielke Sonnenberg. His parents converted to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in their home country. At age six John sailed to America with his mother and siblings, Eric and Rita, and settled in Chicago where his father had obtained employment. John was an apt student and placed on an accelerated academic track. He attended Lane Tech High School, and during his teenage summers landed, with Eric, coveted lifeguard positions on the Chicago beaches of Lake Michigan.

In 1940 John enrolled at Brigham Young University. 1942 saw him in the U.S. Navy assigned to the Dental Corps. He completed his dentistry degree at the University of Louisville where he met Sister Joyce Dalton, a full-time missionary in the Eastern States Mission. After dental school graduation, John pursued Joyce back to Tooele, Utah, ultimately being sealed by Elder Harold B. Lee in the Salt Lake Temple on November 26, 1947. Joyce was the love of his life, and he was constantly devoted to her.

The proud couple returned to Chicago to pursue a dental career and raise their family. Early assignments in the new Chicago Stake included stake missionary and high counselor. In 1963 John was called as first counselor in the newly created Chicago South Stake serving under President Lysle R. Cahoon and with Dallin H. Oaks as second counselor. In 1970 John was called as president of the Chicago South Stake (later Naperville Illinois Stake), and lovingly gave his time to many until his release.

Family remained John\s priority. He and Joyce spent many weekends at their vacation home on Lake Holiday, just west of the city. This served as a gathering place for their burgeoning family during the next three decades.

After release as stake president, John was called as a Regional Representative and served as chairman of the Chicago Temple Committee. In 1984 he was called to serve in the First Quorum of the Seventy. He was assigned to Frankfurt, Germany, where his German language ability helped him create a strong bond with church members. Subsequently, he was called as president of the Pacific Area where he and Joyce traveled among the many isles of the sea. Ever since that special calling, John held a particularly tender love for the people of Polynesia. Following his release as a general authority, he and Joyce served as temple president and matron of the New Zealand Temple in the early 90\s.

In recent years, he served in many local church callings including as sealer in the Salt Lake Temple. He loved his alma mater, BYU, and was honored by receiving its Distinguished Alumni Award. Throughout his life he enjoyed participating in a variety of sports, especially golf, routinely \"shooting his age\" with several hole-in-ones to his

credit.

John had a remarkable memory, recalling not only names but also details of life stories, which astounded and blessed friends and family alike. His life was one of faith and sacrifice that touched many souls, especially his posterity and those whom he served in the Church. He had an unwavering testimony of Jesus Christ and the restored Gospel, which was reflected in his October 1989 General Conference address: \"I bear witness that there is, figuratively speaking, a \North Star\ leading us today,Äîa beloved prophet of God. Look to him. He will point the way of truth and righteousness. Look to the Savior, for He will give you life eternal.\"

John is survived by his lovely wife of 67 years, Joyce; seven children: John David (Terry), James (Young Ja), Brent (Janette), Joan (Les), Dean (Deanna), Scott (Jill), Clair (Terry); 33 grandchildren, and 69 great-grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his parents; siblings Eric and Rita; and great-granddaughter Brittney. Funeral services will be held at the Salt Lake Ensign Stake Center, 135 A Street, Salt Lake City, Utah on Thursday, July 9 at noon. Viewings will be on Wednesday, July 8 from 6-8 p.m. at Larkin Mortuary, 260 E. South Temple, and on Thursday, July 9 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. at the Salt Lake Ensign Stake Center. Burial will be in Wasatch Lawn Memorial Park.

John was a missionary at every opportunity; in lieu of flowers contributions may be made to the LDS General Missionary Fund.