

Lester Thompson

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RANTOUL – Lester L. "Tommy" Thompson, age 88, of Rantoul died Tuesday, Nov. 16, 2010, at Champaign County Nursing Home, Urbana.

He was born June 27, 1922, in rural Kelly Township, Warren County, the son of John J. and Katherine (McKelvie) Thompson.

He graduated from Alexis High School in 1940, retiring from the U.S. Air Force at Little Rock Air Force Base, Little Rock, Ark., with the rank of master sergeant in January 1961. Returning to Rantoul, he worked as a civil service instructor in the AGE Branch until his retirement in 1980.

He married Velma Ernst at St. Bernard's Catholic Church in Peoria on June 14, 1952. She survives.

He is also survived by a daughter, Joan Eble of Rantoul; a son, Bruce, and spouse Barbara, of Chatham; and five grandchildren, Thomas, Shawn and Kathleen Eble and Beth and Beverly Thompson; as well as several nieces and nephews.

He was a member of St. Malachy Catholic Church, a life member of the Knights of Columbus Council 4450, a sir knight of the fourth degree in Rantoul Assembly 234, and a member of Rantoul American Legion Post 287. He was a past grand knight, past faithful navigator and past faithful controller.

Lester enjoyed fishing, hunting, reading and bowling, with a high score of 298. In retirement, he and Velma traveled the United States renewing friendships with Air Force friends and making many new friends as members of the Central Illinois Carryalls Travel Club and enjoying warm winters for many years in Alamo, Texas.

He was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers, Carl and Charles Thompson; two sisters, Katherine Kirby Carr and Mary Smith; an infant son, Joseph; and a daughter, Patricia Thompson.

Friends may call from 4 to 6 p.m. Friday at Lux Memorial Chapel, 1551 E. Grove Ave., Rantoul. Mass of the Resurrection will be at 10 a.m. Saturday at St. Malachy Church, Rantoul, with interment in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Rantoul.

Memorials may be made to the Henry Smith Trust for St. Malachy School, the Disabled American Veterans of America or a charity of the donor's choice.