

William O'Hern

RANTOUL – William John O'Hern, 91, of Rantoul passed away peacefully at the home of his daughter on Thursday (April 14, 2011).

A memorial Mass will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, April 19, at St. Malachy Catholic Church, Rantoul. Father Stanley Malinowski will officiate. Private burial with family will take place Wednesday morning at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Rantoul.

A gathering of family and friends will be 5 to 7 p.m. Monday, April 18, at Lux Memorial Chapel, 1551 E Grove, Rantoul.

Bill was born Feb. 14, 1920, at his family home in Uniontown, Pa., a son of William and Mary (Musser) O'Hern. He married Vivian Beatty August 4, 1944, in Uniontown. She preceded him in death Nov. 7, 2003.

Surviving are eight children, Kathy (Gerald) Thomas of Tucson, Ariz., Bill O'Hern of New York, N.Y., Mike O'Hern of Atascadero, Calif., Patty (Stan) Early of Rantoul, Jane (Michael) Conroy of Mokena, Teresa (Chip Rulon) Rhodehouse, Mission Viejo, Calif., Tim (Leslie) O'Hern of Richmond, Va., and Eileen (Russ) Cederholm of Powhatan, Va. Also surviving are 15 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, seven brothers and sisters, and one grandson, J.P. Kramer.

Bill was in the U.S. Army and then enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. He served in World War II. During his Air Force career he was stationed at Wright Patterson AFB in Dayton, Ohio, Sculthorpe AFB in England and Chanute AFB, where he retired in 1964. He continued working at Chanute in civil service as an Automatic Flight Controls instructor, retiring in 1976.

He was a member of St. Malachy Catholic Church, the Rantoul VFW, and the Rantoul Knights of Columbus, where he was a past Grand Knight in the 4th Degree.

Bill was known as a "Jack of all Trades", working on anything from church organs to school PA systems. He had many interests and hobbies including leather-work, wood working, cooking and baking, playing the ukulele, organ and harmonica, and singing. His true passion was oil painting. Throughout the years he created many beautiful works of art.

He loved to watch football, enjoyed Big Band music, and Skyping with his family. Most of all, he loved spending time with his family. It was never a dull moment when he was around. He told the best stories, loved playing games, and loved "teasing" the little ones. He was the best husband, father, and "Papa Boo" on the planet. Though he will be missed every day, he will always live on in the hearts of the many people he touched throughout his life.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Eastern Illinois Food Bank, Smile Train, Provena Hospice, Susan G. Komen, or a charity of the donor's choice.