



William J. O'Brien

August 8, 1931 - March 13, 2017

O'Brien, Mr. William J.
Saginaw, MI

Passed away on Monday, March 13, 2017, at Covenant Harrison. Age 85 years. Bill was born on August 8, 1931, in Saginaw, to the late William J. and Margaret (McGinnis) O'Brien. Bill graduated from St. Joseph's High School in 1949, where he was a standout athlete in football, basketball, and baseball. He attended Ferris State College. Airman O'Brien served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War. He married Helen L. Breitreitz on May 29, 1954, in Saginaw. She survives him after 62 years of marriage. Bill worked in the grocery and food sales business his entire life. For many years he was the Vice President at Vescio's Grocery Store. He retired from Well's (Blue Bunny) Dairy. He was a member of Holy Cross Lutheran Church. Bill enjoyed woodworking and was an avid sports fan, especially enjoying Tiger baseball and Michigan football. He especially enjoyed spending time with his family and grandchildren, never missing their football and baseball games. Bill's kind and gentle personality, his infectious smile and trademark wink will be missed by many.

Surviving besides his wife, Helen, are three sons and their spouses, Michael (Vanessa) O'Brien, Rockford; James (Elizabeth) O'Brien, Saginaw; Donald (Debra) O'Brien, Saginaw; seven grandchildren, Megan (Adam) North, Caitlin O'Brien, Sean O'Brien, Courtney (Brian) Soule, Christopher Farrell, Michael

Gauthier and Connor O'Brien; one great-granddaughter, Piper Jennings North; two sisters, Mary (Cliff) Gehrls, Sue (William) MacLachlan; and several nieces, nephews and friends. He was predeceased by one son, William P. O'Brien, and three sisters, Patricia, Colleen and Barbara.

Funeral service will take place 11:00 a.m. Saturday, March 18, 2017, at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 600 Court St. The Rev. James F. Krueger will officiate with burial in Roselawn Memorial Gardens. Military honor guard will be conducted under the auspices of the U.S. Air Force and American Legion Post 439. Friends are welcome to visit with the family at the Wakeman Funeral Home, Inc., 1218 N. Michigan Ave., Saginaw, on Friday from 2:00 to 8:00 p.m., then at the church on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until the time of service. Memorial contributions may be given to Holy Cross Lutheran Church. Memories and sympathies of Bill may be shared with the family on his memorial website at WakemanFuneralHome.com

Cemetery Details

Roselawn Memorial Gardens

950 N. Center Rd.
Saginaw, MI 48638

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 17. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Wakeman Funeral Home, Inc.
1218 N. Michigan Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48602
(989) 752-8531
wakemanfh@charter.net

Visitation

MAR 18. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
600 Court St.
Saginaw, MI 48602

Funeral Service

MAR 18. 11:00 AM (ET)

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
600 Court St.
Saginaw, MI 48602

Committal Service & Military Honors Ceremony

MAR 18. 12:15 PM (ET)

Roselawn Memorial Gardens Chapel
950 N. Center Road
Saginaw, MI 48638

Tribute Wall



“ *William J. O'Brien*

September 13, 2022 at 05:01 PM



“ *William J. O'Brien*

September 13, 2022 at 02:27 PM



“ *Helen, Glen and I were so sad to hear about Bill. Since we are "Monday night church family" we will miss him and his great smile. He was always so special to us. He had the best hugs ever. We loved him not only as a friend but as our brother in Christ.*

Glen and Ruth Berkobien

Ruth Berkobien - March 21, 2017 at 10:28 AM



“ *I will always remember Uncle Bill as one of the kindest men I have ever met. I remember no harsh words (maybe a stern look when we were really acting up with the cousins...) and always a gentleman in every respect. We will all miss him greatly. Aunt Helen, we have donated to Holy cross in Uncle Bill's name per your wishes.*

Jim and Monica Breitkreitz

James Breitkreitz - March 18, 2017 at 09:50 AM

ST

“ *What a wonderful man of faith Bill was! We enjoyed having you both as friends in the Lord at Holy Cross. May God bless you, Helen.*

stephanie - March 17, 2017 at 04:40 PM

TF

“ *The Demsky Family purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of William J. O'Brien.*



The Demsky Family - March 17, 2017 at 02:29 PM

CD

“ *Praying for all of you as you say goodbye. I only met my great-uncle a few times, but my grandmother loved him and talked about him frequently. She loved her siblings so much, and she missed all of them because she lived so far away. Blessings and peace to you all.*

Crystal Demsky, daughter of Vincent Demsky, Jr., granddaughter of Patricia O'Brien Demsky

Crystal Demsky - March 17, 2017 at 10:39 AM



“ *Serene Reflections Bouquet was purchased for the family of William J. O'Brien.*



March 16, 2017 at 10:12 PM

AG

“ Dear O'Brien family: I'm so sorry for your loss of an amazing man. My dad thought the world of him, and I know Uncle Bill and him shared a wonderful sense of humor. He will be missed dearly. Love to you all, Mandy Gehrls

Amanda Gehrls - March 16, 2017 at 06:22 PM

TD

“ Dear Aunt Helen, Mike, Jim, Don and families, I am truly sorry for your loss. Uncle Bill was the best! His kind and gentle way, his infectious laugh, his soft smile and twinkling blue eyes: he will be missed by all who loved and knew him.
Tim & Lori Dunn

Timothy J. Dunn - March 16, 2017 at 02:25 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of William J. O'Brien.



March 16, 2017 at 01:44 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket* was purchased for the family of William J. O'Brien.



March 16, 2017 at 08:31 AM

WH

“ *with love Helene purchased the Bountiful Rose Basket for the family of William J. O'Brien.*



with love Helene - March 15, 2017 at 03:05 PM

MD

“ *Goodbye Uncle Bill. My thoughts are with you Aunt Helen. Mark Demsky*

Mark Demsky - March 15, 2017 at 06:41 AM

RD

“ *Aunt Helen, Mike, Jim, Don, and families, I am deeply sorry for your loss. Without a doubt, Uncle Bill was a great man whose kindness, and love touched everyone he came into contact with. May God give you comfort and strength, in your time of loss.*

Robert J. Dunn

Robert J. Dunn - March 15, 2017 at 02:41 AM

WW

“ *honored to know mr. O'Brien when I met him at the Saginaw geriatrics visiting Uncle Eddie he made me feel like royalty*

Woody Wilson - March 14, 2017 at 05:54 PM



“ ? purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of William J. O'Brien.



? - March 14, 2017 at 02:02 PM



“ Dear Helen and Family my deepest sympathy for your loss. I always enjoyed talking with Bill when we were at Mike's house. Bill was such a kind man. What an amazing life you shared together for so many years, and always looked so devoted to each other. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. Bill will be remembered and missed.

Yvonne Eynon - March 14, 2017 at 12:54 PM



“ O'BRIEN family, may God give you comfort in your time of grief.

pastor Bill & Becky Bodnar - March 14, 2017 at 11:56 AM



“ Sue and family So sorry for the loss of your brother. I remember him as being very tall and good looking. Prayers and sympathy are with you and your family.

mary jane jacob - March 14, 2017 at 11:25 AM



“ Condolences to the O'Brien family from one of the other original North Wayside Families.
-- The Kent's

J. Kent - March 14, 2017 at 11:09 AM

BS

“ Our deepest sympathy , **HE WAS A REALLY NICE FELLOW.** We will miss him. Barb and Harold Sebald.

Barb & Harold Sebald. - March 14, 2017 at 09:44 AM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of William J. O'Brien.



March 14, 2017 at 09:40 AM

MA

“ I adored Uncle Bill. He was calm and sweet always seemed so very tall. I was only four, but I remember the wedding, standing on the steps of the church, and how Aunt Helen looked like a princess. I will miss him, but I know he lived a wonderful, full life and loved his family.

Marge

Marge - March 14, 2017 at 08:37 AM

JA

“ Dear Aunt Helen, Mike, Jim, Don and family,
I am so saddened to hear about Uncle Bill and wish that I could be there to support you during this difficult time. He was a true bright light and very loved and respected by our entire family. He will be missed. Love, Jayne and family

Jayne - March 13, 2017 at 10:29 PM

VD

“ Dear Aunt Helen, Mike, Jim, Don and families. I am so sorry to hear of Uncle Bills passing. I will always remember his smiles, hugs, and winks. Some of my fondest memories were at the Breitzkreitz's Christmas gatherings. I so wish I could be there for the funeral but unfortunately I am working. My thoughts and prayers are with all of you. Love you all and take good care of your Mom, she is going to miss him dearly. Valerie Dine and family

Valerie Dine - March 13, 2017 at 06:55 PM

BW

“ Dearest Helen Loved getting those hugs from him ...Gentle giant among men... You were blessed to have him 62 yrs...May God comfort you and your family during this time...He will be missed....God's blessings...Bev Wright

Bev Wright - March 13, 2017 at 06:11 PM

PK

“ Dear Aunt Helen and family, We are going to miss a wonderful uncle and a true gentleman. And of course, those twinkling Irish eyes! Love and Prayers, Peggy and Doug Klann

Peggy Klann - March 13, 2017 at 05:31 PM