



Melvin W. Lanzer

February 24, 1922 - May 12, 2014

Melvin Walter Lanzer, age 92, of Napoleon, OH, peacefully passed away on May 12, 2014 in his home.

Melvin was born on February 24, 1922 in the family farmhouse of parents Walter and Nettie (Selstrom) Lanzer in Monroe Township near Deshler, OH. He was the oldest of three children. He attended school in Monroe Township and graduated from Hamler High School in 1940. He worked on the family farm until 1942.

In 1943, Mel joined the United States Army and served in Cannon Company 347th Infantry Regiment and was also a Liaison agent in Scotland, England, France, Belgium, Germany, and Luxemburg. He was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, the European/African/Middle Eastern Theater Campaign Ribbon, the American Theater Campaign Ribbon, the Victory Medal, and received a Purple Heart due to injuries sustained in battle. He received an Honorable Discharge on November 18, 1945.

After returning from the army in 1945, he worked at Kellsey Freeman Lumber Co., E.R. Haines Co., and Napoleon Builders and Cabinetmakers until 1950. On April 11th of 1948, Mel married Margarete Norden of Ridgeville. The couple recently celebrated their 66th wedding anniversary.

In 1950 Mel partnered with Lawrence Sonnenberg to form a construction company, and in 1951 it became the Mel Lanzer Company. Mel worked out of his home and garage in Napoleon constructing houses and some churches until 1956, when he moved the business to its present location at 2266 Scott

Street. The Mel Lanzer Company became well known as a General Contractor in the commercial construction field. Mel officially "retired" July 24, 1987 but continued to come in to his office 6 days a week up until his passing. Mel remained as Chairman of the Board of the Mel Lanzer Company, and was a longtime member of the Napoleon Rotary Club. He began his Rotary membership on March 10, 1957, served on many of its boards, was the 25th Rotary president in '71-'72, and had 31 years of perfect attendance through 1988.

Mel was involved with children with developmental disabilities since 1954 and served on the local MRDD board. He served on a number of different boards and councils over the years including Quadco Rehabilitation Services, Hope School, Happi Time School, Northwest Visiting Nurses Association, Lutheran Old Folks Home, Henry County Soldier's Relief Fund, Shawnee Council of the Boy Scouts of America, Four County Joint Vocational School, Northwest Technical Institute, Napoleon Chamber of Commerce, Napoleon Building Codes and Building Appeals Committees, National Home Builders Association, and the Henry County Bank.

He also served as a member of the Small Business Association in the Toledo area and the State of Ohio and was a member of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Human Services. He was instrumental in starting the local Northwest Ohio board of the Associated Builders and Contractors and served as its first president. He was a partner in the Rohm development of Anthony Wayne Acres in Napoleon and was an active member of Emanuel Lutheran Church in Napoleon.

Honors and awards include being a Paul Harris Fellow of the Rotary Club of America, Henry County Citizen of the Year in 1971, and was appointed by Congressman Latta to be a delegate to the White House Conference representing the Northwest Ohio area for the Small Business Association in 1980. He received a certificate for over 50 years of continued leadership with the American Legion, and in 2012 was the recipient of the Excellence in Family Business Award given by the Entrepreneurial & Business Excellence

Hall of Fame.

Melvin is survived by his wife; Margarete of Napoleon, a brother; Lavern Lanzer of Napoleon, and 4 children; Cheryl (Joe) Huffman of Napoleon, Vanessa Lanzer of Napoleon, Charlotte (Tom) Zgela of Hamler, and Matthew (Toni) Lanzer of Malinta. Grandchildren; Jonathan (Jessica) Huffman of Canal Winchester, Nikki Zgela of Marblehead, Lyndsey (John) Lucas of Perrysburg, Megan (Andy) Rice of Haskins, and Senna, Tara, and Damian Lanzer of Malinta. Melvin has one great-grandchild; Logan Huffman of Canal Winchester.

Melvin was preceded in death by daughter Deborah Lanzer and sister Ruby Young.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, May 15th at Emanuel Lutheran Church, Napoleon. Interment will follow at the Glenwood Cemetery where military honors will be accorded by Napoleon Joint Veterans Post.

Visitation will be held on Wednesday from 2 - 8 p.m. at Rodenberger Funeral Home, Napoleon and Thursday from 10-11 a.m. at the church.

Memorials are suggested to Hope Services Foundation and Hospice of Henry County.

Online condolences may be made at www.rodenbergerfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Glenwood Cemetery

Napoleon, OH 43545

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY **14**. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Napoleon Funeral Home
1010 Westmoreland Avenue
Napoleon, OH 43545
(419) 592-2333
help@rodenbergergray.com

Visitation

MAY **15**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Emanuel Lutheran Church
Napoleon, OH 43545

Service

MAY **15**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Emanuel Lutheran Church
Napoleon, OH 43545

Tribute Wall

DT

“ *Mel was a great person and a great boss to work for. I really looked up to this great man. He will be a legend to remember in my heart. Denny Tonjes*

Dennis Tonjes - May 14, 2014 at 10:22 AM

JH

“ *My sympathy to the Lanzer family. Mr. and Mrs. Lanzer were active and supportive to the Developmental Disability services, and I was always grateful for that. Their support helped many individuals with disabilities. I'm very sorry for the loss of Mr. Lanzer and my prayers are extended to the family.*

Jane Wright Haggerty - May 14, 2014 at 09:44 AM

KL

“ *Our sincere sympathy for your loss. God give you strength. Kathy & Steve Lieb*

Kathy & Steve Lieb - May 14, 2014 at 09:06 AM

DW

“ *Dan, Toni, Florence, Mary Ann, Gladys, Joan, and Wanda purchased the Imagination Blooms for the family of Melvin W. Lanzer.*



Dan, Toni, Florence, Mary Ann, Gladys, Joan, and Wanda -
May 14, 2014 at 08:07 AM



“ Char, Tom, Lindsey, Nikki, Megan and families, our sincere condolences on the loss of your father and grandfather. Randy and Deb Wensink, Zac and Kara Middleton

Deb Wensink - May 13, 2014 at 06:52 PM

BL

“ Marge- Our thoughts and prayers are with you and the Lanzer Family. I never got to know Mel very well due to our age difference, but always looked up to him. He bought the 40 acres from me over on 281 after I farmed it after my Dad-Alfred Lanzer passed away several years ago. ALL THE BEST TO YOU!! Bernard & Nancy Lanzer

Bernard Lanzer - May 13, 2014 at 12:35 PM

JW

“ Long ago block neighbor and classmate of Cheryl remembers Mel very well. Condolences and sympathy to the Lanzer family. Good Memories, and a good man.

John Walker

John Walker - May 13, 2014 at 11:21 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Melvin W. Lanzer.



May 13, 2014 at 10:02 AM

NC

“ *Nikki's Rite Aid Co-Workers purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Melvin W. Lanzer.*



Nikki's Rite Aid Co-Workers - May 13, 2014 at 06:53 AM

JE

“ *Marg and Family,*

We send our sympathy to you and family, we will always have a lot of good memories from years past.

*Sincerely,
Jean and Bob Schlueter*

Jean - May 12, 2014 at 06:52 PM

SM

“ *Marg and family, I am so sorry to hear of Mel's passing he was a great guy. I have many childhood memories of coming into the office to see dad and Mel would be there. I also remember coming over to your house several times. We send our love, thoughts, and prayers to all of you.*

Sarah Osterhout Murray, Grant and Cate

sarah osterhout murray - May 12, 2014 at 03:02 PM