



Thomas "Sam" Leo Irmen

January 14, 1928 - October 16, 2019

Thomas L. "Sam" Irmen, of Maumee, Ohio, passed away peacefully at age 91 on October 16, 2019, at Promedica Ebeid Hospice Residence in Sylvania. His life is treasured and celebrated by Charlee, his wife of 70 years, his daughters Jaine Place, Jean (deceased at birth), JoDee (Bruce) Robertson, and Betsy (Andy) Damm, and his sons Pat (Bridget), Mike (Shannon), Terry (Tonia) and Tom (Julia). He was "Grampa Sam" to 18 grandchildren and their spouses, as well as 7 great grandchildren. He was a beloved brother to four sisters: Mary Ann Colturi of Sylvania, Jean O'Connell of Toledo, Rita McInnis of Paradise Valley, AZ, and Kathleen O'Neill of Estero, FL. He was a brother-in-law to Eileen Irmen of Kalamazoo, MI, widow of Sam's only brother Jim, who preceded him in death in 2018.

Sam's dedication to family was legendary. Nothing made him happier or prouder than knowing his family of 48 descendants all loved being together and that everyone felt he or she was his favorite. Nothing made his family happier than feeling his great love, laughing at his teasing and self-deprecating humor, his wise counsel only upon request, and his never-failing pride and support in their struggles as well as their accomplishments. Regardless of the project, celebration or practical joke, his family learned that big event planning under Sam's leadership would unfailingly take on ridiculously huge and creative proportions, with laughter always at the center. This was his cunning approach to building a family known for service to others. Sam also set the example for quiet spirituality and dedication to his

Catholic community, always demonstrating how caring for others not as fortunate and putting in the work to help them meet their life challenges was the most important form of prayer.

Sam was born to parents Stephen and Kathryn Irmen in Maumee on January 14, 1928. He attended St. Charles Catholic Elementary School and was a 1945 graduate of Central Catholic High School in Toledo. He graduated with a B.S. in Agriculture from Michigan State University in 1949, where he was especially proud to be the captain of MSU's first national championship track and cross country teams. In 1945, while at MSU, he met his future wife, Charlene Gates, whom he married on November 26, 1949.

Sam began working for the Anderson's dairy farm while still in high school and stayed with The Andersons for 48 years as they built their first grain terminal in Maumee and eventually developed the company to become one of the premier agribusinesses in the country. He was a highly respected leader who was committed to perfecting grain operations, as well as making an art of community and government relations. Never happy with average results, he was always driven to "exceed expectations," a phrase he was so proud to incorporate in the mission statement he helped develop for the company. More importantly, Sam was known for his absolute integrity, his laser focus and project team leadership, his respect for every employee, and his friendly sense of humor. He was president of several national trade organizations representing American farmers and agribusiness. He retired from The Andersons in 1995.

He was a gifted public speaker and dedicated community leader who devoted countless hours to charitable work, especially Maumee Valley Habitat for Humanity, where he led the construction of almost 40 homes, and served on the Board of Directors over many years, leveraging his many friendships to acquire properties and services and to enhance community outreach. In 2007, he was honored with a nomination for the Jefferson Award for Public Service, a nationwide program for honoring ordinary people who do extraordinary things without expectation of recognition. He was a founding board member

of, and decades-long participant in, the William Guy Forbeck Research Foundation in 1985, dedicated to accelerating progress in the fight against cancer through a unique approach to scientific collaborations to hasten cancer research.

Visitation 2-8pm Friday, Oct. 18, at Coyle Funeral Home, 1770 S. Reynolds Road, Toledo, OH 43614. Prayer service at 6:30 pm, followed by shared personal reflections. Funeral Mass will be held at 10:30am, Saturday, Oct. 19, at St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church, 5856 Heatherdowns Blvd., Toledo, followed by lunch reception. Private burial service for family at St. Joseph's Catholic Cemetery in Maumee following luncheon. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church or to a charity of choice.

Cemetery Details

St Joseph (Maumee)

104 West Broadway Street
Maumee, OH 43537

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT 18. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Coyle Funeral Home
1770 S. Reynolds Road
Toledo, OH 43614

Funeral

OCT 19. 10:30 AM (ET)

St Joan Of Arc
5856 Heatherdowns Blvd
Toledo, OH

Tribute Wall

MB

“ *My sincere condolences to all of my Irmén cousins. He was one great man.*

-Mike Biesiada, Fort Wayne

Mike Biesiada - December 04, 2019 at 10:23 AM

CT

“ *I'm so sorry I never got to meet Sam! I love learning about him from the obituary and feel sure we would have gotten along famously (as it sounds like he did with everyone). What a loss! I am sending the whole family and his community my deepest condolences and big, big virtual hugs. (Colleen Thomas)*

Colleen Thomas - November 02, 2019 at 06:51 PM

BL

“ *My deepest condolences for the loss of your father. I remember you boys the most, many great memories from St Joe's and Troop 104. It seems you all had the best role model you possibly could have had.*

Brian E Little

Brian E Little - October 21, 2019 at 06:38 PM

LN

“ We will never forget Sam and Charlee’s kindness and friendship when Tom started teaching and coaching at the new Jesuit boys school, St Johns. Sam was an exceptional person who helped build a business, contributed to the community, supported his church and always put his family first. Sending our love and condolences to Charlee and all the Irmes family.

Tom and Lorri

Lorraine Norris - October 18, 2019 at 07:15 PM

PD

“ *Charlee and the Tom Irmes Family:*

We send our sincere condolences to all. Sam was a beautiful human being who led an exemplary life. We will keep all of you in our thoughts and prayers. May he rest in peace forever! Phil and Maralee Douglas Estero, Florida

Phil Douglas - October 18, 2019 at 01:29 PM

MI

“ Having lived all my life around the Maumee area, it used to amaze me the number of people I would meet, who recognized the Irmen name and in particular, Sam! He sure had a personality that affected so many folks in such a positive way! Rest in peace cousin for a life so well lived!

I met Sam in the 1980's when Mark and I were engaged. I was amazed that when I would casually see him in the Anderson's store he remembered my name and gave me a hug. I will never forget his smile. It runs in the family. Our Lord is smiling too, good and faithful servant.

Mark Irmen and Cindy

Mark and Cindy Irmen - October 18, 2019 at 11:44 AM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Thomas "Sam" Leo Irmen.*



October 18, 2019 at 10:05 AM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Thomas "Sam" Leo Irmen.*



October 18, 2019 at 09:42 AM

MS

“ O God of spirits and of all flesh, You have trampled down death and have abolished the power of the devil, giving life to Your world. You have given rest to the soul of Your departed servant, Sam Irmen — in a place of light, in a place of green pasture, in a place of refreshment — where there is no pain, where there is no sorrow, and where there is no suffering. As a good and loving Savior, thank you for forgiving every sin he committed in thought, in word, or in deed; for there is no one who lives and is sinless. You alone are without sin. Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness and Your word is truth. For you, Christ our God, are the resurrection, the life, and the repose of Your departed servant, Sam. To You we give glory, with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and forever and unto the ages of ages. May your memory be eternal, dear brother, for you are worthy of blessedness and everlasting memory in Christ.

Michael Sares - October 18, 2019 at 08:51 AM



“ *Enduring Grace* was purchased for the family of Thomas "Sam" Leo Irmen.



October 17, 2019 at 09:50 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of Thomas "Sam" Leo Irmen.



October 17, 2019 at 09:33 PM

OT

“ *Orris and Tess purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Thomas "Sam" Leo Irmen.*



Orris and Tess - October 17, 2019 at 07:53 PM

JT

“ *I will never forget Sam's humorous, teasing friendship with my sister Shirley Anne Roeger. And his amazing dedication to Habitat. How blessed we were to know him. Sincere condolences to dear Charlee and all the family. Judy Trautman*

Judy Trautman - October 17, 2019 at 05:42 PM

CH

“ *Sam will be a lifelong memory and smile for me. He lived life to its fullest and shared it with everyone he met. He and Charlee created a wonderful family and their lessons and traditions will carry on Forever! May his family feel God`s Peace. I believe that he is still smiling.*

Chris Henry

Christopher G Henry - October 17, 2019 at 04:29 PM

EK

“ Memories range from epic Easter basket hunts on the Farm as a child to noble yet humble mentor as an adult. I consider myself among the blessed to have referred to this special man as "Grandpa Sam," if not by blood than by close association. For me, he will be remembered for his wit and sense of humor, his gentle yet always enthusiastic smile and greeting, his tireless energy to lift up those around him, and his unending commitment to friends and family. I will forever feel honored to have been able to fill his nail belt on Habitat jobs and to get a wave from the lawn mower. You will be missed deeply, Grandpa Sam.

Our prayers are with you and your entire awesome family!

-- Eric Kraus

Eric Kraus - October 17, 2019 at 03:25 PM

JE

“ An excellent example of giving your life to the Lord. When Sam retired from ANDE I was asked to find something to give him at his retirement party that would remind him of his elevator roots... I commissioned a friend of mine to build an oak plaque with a miniature brass grain probe. He commented more than once how much he liked it. He was a great human being. May God grant all the Irmen family members peace during this difficult time. Jeff Hahn

Jeff - October 17, 2019 at 03:01 PM

NS

“ Sam Irmen. HELL OF A GUY, I was a BGSU senior when I first started in the office (took a break from the general store) and worked for Julia Chandler in grain - we all sat right outside Sam's office in 1992- me, Linda Linn, Barb Welling, Mark Ziehr, Stephanie Marlow, Liz Osgood and we would LAUGH ALL THE TIME. Sam would walk out and tell jokes and ALWAYS had a smile on his face. After he retired he would always stop in - always on the go and always with that smile and humor and he ALWAYS stopped to ask how everyone was doing. The man was the picture of integrity and a wonderful example. He had a wonderful life and we pray that he now rest in peace. God bless all of the Irmen family!!! We are thinking of you! Nicole (Foster) and Rick Swank

Nicole Swank - October 17, 2019 at 02:02 PM

TP

“ May the Angels lead him home! It was a blessing to learn from Sam what being a true Catholic Christian was all about. My prayers are with you all!

Terri Pastura - October 17, 2019 at 01:29 PM

S1

“ St. Joan of Arc Knights of Columbus Council 15905 purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Thomas "Sam" Leo Irmen.



St. Joan of Arc Knights of Columbus Council 15905 - October 17, 2019 at 12:46 PM



“ *Fall Fantasia* was purchased for the family of Thomas "Sam" Leo Irmen.



October 17, 2019 at 11:48 AM