



Bert Watkins, Jr.

June 13, 2024

Bert Watkins Jr., 99, of Sarasota Florida and East St. Louis /Belleville, Illinois, husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, veteran, patriot, and friend to almost all left this life and joined his beloved wife, Beth, in Heaven June 13, 2024.

Bert lived the American dream. He was born in Thayer Illinois, son of a coal miner and homemaker. Growing up during the depression, he helped support his family by raising chickens, rabbits and delivering papers. After graduating from high school in Bethalto Illinois, Bert served with the Army to fight in WW2. Bert served in Patton's Third Army in The Battle of the Bulge, seeing and experiencing war's horror firsthand. A couple days before the war ended, he was shot and spent 6 months in various hospitals around the world. He received the Purple Heart and Bronze Star for his heroic service.

Upon returning to Bethalto Illinois, he married Beth Elliott, his high school sweetheart. Bert and Beth moved to East St. Louis/Belleville Illinois and raised their family there. Bert worked his way up in the insurance industry first as an employee, partner, owner, and then started other businesses. Along the way, Bert and Beth put three children through college. Bert's life went from the depths of despair to seeing the best the world had to offer.

Bert and Beth loved traveling the world and instilled their love of travel to their

kids and grandkids. Bert always had a positive outlook on life and helped many people during his lifetime. Bert was a member of the Masonic Lodge and Signal Hill United Methodist Church.

Bert is survived by his children, Sandi (Willie)Watkins/Pritchard of Brentwood, California, Brad Watkins of Placida, Florida, David (Deborah) Watkins of Sarasota, Florida, grandchildren Carl Watkins(Julie), Sarah Pritchard, Enid Watkins/Holleyman(Taylor), Brynn Craig(Aaron), Taylor Watkins, Caitlin Pfeifle, Morgan Tiefenthal (Chris), seven great-grandchildren, and sister Elsie Smith of Glen Carbon, Illinois. He was preceded in death by wife Beth Watkins, his parents, Bert and Alice Watkins, sisters, Lydia Rink, Margaret Blacklock, Sarah Innis, and brother Jack Watkins

Funeral arrangements will be private at Bethalto Methodist Cemetery in Illinois. Donations and memorials can be made to Tunnels to Towers and the Wounded Warrior Project.

Condolences can be shared at Toale Brothers funeral home, Sarasota, Florida.

Tribute Wall



“ *My thoughts are with all of the family. I always enjoyed his stories when I was a kid, especially about the military and his travels. He lived a very full life and will be greatly missed.* ”

Karen Hecker - June 30, 2024 at 04:07 PM



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Toale Brothers Funeral Home & Crematory - June 26, 2024 at 03:14 PM