

Joel J. Kunesh

Loving Husband, Father, Grandfather

Born on: May 16th, 1936

Went home to be with the Lord: February 12th, 2011

Joel became “Dad” to me when I married his middle son, Mike, nearly 20 years ago. My second Dad. From that moment on, he has always held a special place for me and a piece of my heart.

Others in the family also know him as Dad, as well as Papa and Grandpa. Many in the community know him as Joel Kunesch, village trustee of Winfield, something he was so proud of and loved so much. Yet others know him simply as, Joel.

He was a husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather, neighbor and friend to so many whose lives he touched.

The things that come so strongly to mind when I think of Dad are persistence and determination. When he wanted something, he never let anything deter him. When he wanted the office of village trustee so badly, he didn't let a few losses stop him. He was right back at it the next election and his determination won out, and he won this coveted position not only once, but twice.

Dad relied on that same persistence as well as on his faith, when he came up against the most challenging fight of his life. Battling years of illness with so few answers. Throughout, he kept a smile on his face despite the pain, and his persistence and determination remained no matter what obstacle he faced. He kept hope in his heart despite the suffering and uncertainty. Some may say that Dad's determination wasn't able to overcome in the end. But this is not true. Though difficult for him and also difficult for all of us who love him, he won the ultimate prize as he is now no longer suffering and is in God's arms, hearing “Well done good and faithful servant” Matthew 25:21

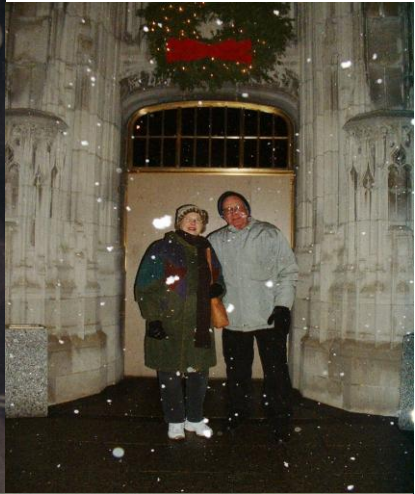
I will always remember Dad's joyful and giving spirit, how he loved to talk sports and politics with my husband/his son, how he loved to garden and how his interest in gardening rubbed off on my husband, who now shares that same passion. I will have warm memories of my many conversations with Dad as he and I shared a passion for computers and the internet. I will always remember his heartfelt encouragement in the things I chose to pursue and his belief in me when so few others did. I will hold dear in my heart memories of Dad and Mom waltzing at our wedding and how much he loved watching the music concerts at Cantigny. I will always remember his wisdom.

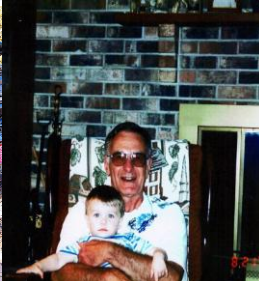
I miss you terribly Dad. We all do and we always will. I will miss your smile, your kind eyes, your laugh and just simply visiting and spending time talking with you. But we take comfort in knowing that your suffering here is now over and that you are in the arms of God, experiencing the joy and complete peace of heaven, and that we will see you again. Until then, know that you are dearly loved and are dearly missed.

Dad, thank you for your love and for being strong and persistent no matter what. You remain an inspiration to me....Dad, thank you for everything. We love you!

Debbie







Our favorite memory of Uncle Joel was back in June 2005 when I brought my family to Chicago so they had the opportunity to meet the family. Both of my kids loved meeting Uncle Joel and Aunt Harriett and seeing the sights of Chicago. Andrew wanted to ride the "L" so on our way to the Cubs/Red Sox game we were able to ride the "L" to Wrigley Field. It was such a fun trip for us. I am so thankful we had the opportunity to spend the time with him.

We love you Uncle Joel!
Ellen (Joel's niece), Les,
Andrew and Justine Thompson,
Layton, UT

One of the memories I have about dad is when I was ten or so we would go fishing at the lake in the area. We would set up our chairs, put our worms on the hook, that I dug up the night before. Dad would read the paper and smoke his pipe and everything was so calm. We never really caught any good size fish but there was one time when dad was not so calm. He finally caught something big. It took him a while to reel it in. He was so excited, this was our first real fish. He finally brought it in and it was the biggest, ugliest cat fish I ever saw. I was kinda scared of it. He was so proud of it he threw it in the trunk of the car and we took it home to show everyone. I think that was the biggest fish he ever caught and the ugliest fish I ever saw.

Chris Kunesh
(son)

Mr. Kunesh was an amazing person.

Erika Claussner (niece to Joel's son Mike)

I have fond memories of him as my protector and him taking care of me when I was a little girl.

Katherine Korb (Joel's sister)

Papa, I will always remember our trips to see you for 4th of July. I loved it that you made me a part of your family. I will always remember you taking us to the band in the park and we would go get ice cream. When we started flying out there our flight would always be delayed and we would get ice cream at the airport to pass time. You are loved and we are going to miss you lots. But you will always be remembered.

Melanie Esper-Perozek
Cousin to Joel's grandchildren,
Joel III and Stephanie

Dad had a special impact and involvement in our sports participation. From coaching our little league baseball teams, taking us to weekend softball games at State Road Park, playing ball in the backyard to putting up a basketball hoop in the driveway.

He was also responsible for my high school cross country career and love for running. As a young lad he took me daily to a running track to run with him. Usually a mile. He encouraged me to run more. Once he made a deal. A dip of ice cream at Baskin Robbins for each mile I ran. The next day I ran 3 miles figuring 3dips. He saw my distance running potential, fearing he'd lose his shirt buying ice cream for me and he set a limit of 2 dips for each run.

I loved my Dad for his participation in our sports participation.

Mike Kunesh (son)

We were talking about the times we had with dad and I thought I would like to share the times I spent with him in the driveway.

We would come over with the kids and always end up either in the driveway in the lawn chairs under the basketball hoop or we would sit in the lawn chairs in the backyard. Either way we were in the danger zone!

Dad would tell the kids to play some basketball, so he and I would sit (and this is where he made us sit) under the hoop. Then he would tell the kids where to shoot and how to shoot. If they missed, dad would just smile and returned the ball with some gentle critiquing.

Then there were times we would be over and he would tell the kids to play baseball in the backyard, well we would sit in the lawn chairs in the foul zone. There were many other areas to sit but it had to be there. Later I found out why. I asked him and he told me this is what will intimidate the kids and make them think how to play smart. If we were hit with a ball the kids were told what they did wrong. Believe it or not this really did work, the kids never wanted to hit anyone and that made them be better baseball and basketball players.

I also want to share the times we would go to Chicago with mom and dad every year at Christmas time. Dad always would have to walk ahead of us and all the rest of us would be way behind him. Well as the years went on and the kids were getting older they too would try to keep up with him. I think Jim was the one who kept his pace and would walk with dad.

When we would reach our destination one of us would ask dad and Jim, well I see you made it and dad would say, I was here first, where were you?

Lynn Kunesh (Joel's daughter-in-law (Chris)



Joel is survived & loved by:

His wife: Harriett

Sons:

Joel, Jr (Terri)

Mike (Debbie)

Chris (Lynn)

Grandchildren:

Stephanie

Joel III (Jen)

Jim

Kayla

Scott

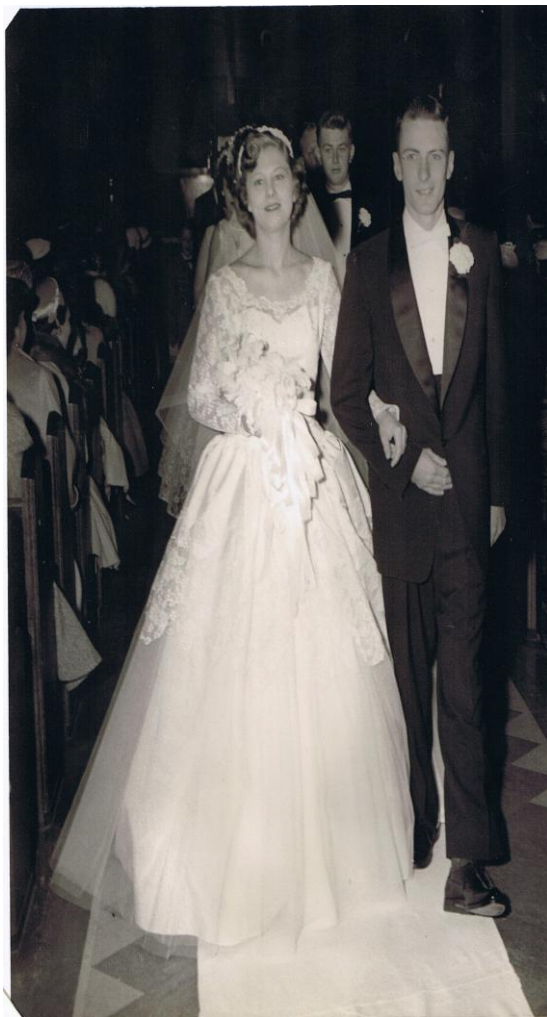
Great Grandchild:

Ellie (Joel III and Jen)

Sisters:

Jane

Kate



Timothy 4:7-8

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

John 11:25-26

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.



*He saves us through the washing of
rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,
whom he poured out on us generously
through Jesus Christ our Savior, so
that, having been justified by his grace,
we might become heirs having the hope
of eternal life*

Titus 3:5-7