

Tom Bark Kretsinger, Sr.

Tom Bark Kretsinger, Sr. departed this world, Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014, surrounded by family at his home in Liberty, Mo.

Tom was born on January 5, 1930, in Kansas City, Mo., the eldest son of Carll Vrooman Kretsinger and Kathryn Bark Kretsinger. His mother passed away in 1937. In 1938, his father married Mary Joan Hockett, with whom Tom shared a very special relationship. He attended Southwest High School, Wentworth Military Academy, Drury College and Kansas City Law School (Now UMKC). In the early 1950's, he served in the U.S. Air Force, receiving honorable discharge as a Sergeant. Musically talented, Tom was a member of the Air Force Band and played piano throughout his life.

Along with his parents, Tom was preceded in death by his nine-year old sister, Martha Nell Kretsinger; a brother, Gordon Hockett Kretsinger; and sister, Ann Kretsinger Brown.

He revered his grandfather and namesake, Tom Burrow Bark, an early pioneer and self-made man of Sutherland, Iowa. He had a lifelong bond with Lake Okoboji, Iowa, a special place introduced to him by his grandfather and where his parents first met. He enjoyed flying airplanes. He first soloed as a young man in Spencer, Iowa.

Tom was a devoted husband, father, patriarch, businessman and attorney. He met Carolyn Trimble in law school and they were married on February 18, 1955 at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Kansas City, Mo. They had eight children. Shortly after the birth of their first son, they were among the first suburbanites, moving to a 100-acre farm in Roosterville, Mo., where they raised a large family. Years later, Tom developed the farm into Woodlyn Estates, one of the first 3 acre subdivisions in Clay County, Mo.

Upon passing the bar in 1957, Tom joined his father, Carll, in the law firm, Kretsinger and Kretsinger, in Kansas City, Mo., where they specialized in motor carrier law. Although, he made his career in I.C.C. law and provided for his family from regulation of the trucking industry, he advocated deregulation and had a strong desire to become a businessman. In 1972, he purchased E. K. Motor Service, in Joliet, Ill. He eventually changed the name to American Central Transport (ACT) and moved the business to Liberty, Mo. In 1980, he moved the law firm from downtown Kansas City to the square in Liberty, where he was joined in the practice by his son, Tom, Jr. His sons, Bill and Bob joined the trucking business upon their graduations from college. Tom, Jr. left the practice of law and joined them in the trucking business in 1998. The business has grown under Tom's vision to one of the largest over-the-road trucking companies in Kansas City. Tom liked to spend each day at the office, going around and talking with employees and associates. In the words of a long time ACT employee, "He cared about his employees as people, always listening and thinking of ways to make the company a wonderful place."

Tom was co-owner of The Dish Pizza, a restaurant and frozen pizza business he founded with his daughter, Martha Ransom, and her husband, Jason.

Tom was a member of the Missouri Bar Association and was named a Senior Counselor and honored by the Clay County, Missouri Bar Association after 50 years of practice. He was active in the American Trucking Association, The Truckload Carriers Association, the Iowa Motor Truck Association and the Missouri Trucking Association. He served on the Boards of Directors of each of these associations and enjoyed seeing friends and colleagues at industry

conventions. He served as Chairman of the Independent Contractors' Division of TCA, Chairman of the TCA regulatory policy committee and on the By-Laws Committee. He was a past Board Member of First National Bank of Liberty.

He was a man of faith, dedicated and active in his church. He was a member of Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral in Kansas City and St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Spirit Lake, Iowa. He was a founder of the Church of the Messiah (now Grace Episcopal Church) in Liberty and held in many roles in the Episcopal Church, including, Treasurer and Vestryman of Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral.

Tom's most cherished value and most lasting legacy is his family, which he placed above all. Of all the titles he held, "Dad", "Granddaddy" and "Great Granddaddy," were the most important. He left a large Kretsinger clan. He taught generational values of the importance of family, and loved the share the stories of how his ancestors influenced his life. Most pictures of Tom show him with a grandchild or great-grandchild on his lap.

His son, Joseph Francis Kretsinger, predeceased him in 1972. Tom always kept a picture of "Little Joe" nearby. Tom is finally with him after the long separation.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Carolyn Trimble Kretsinger. They recently renewed their vows.

He leaves a lasting and proud legacy, including seven surviving children and their spouses: Tom, Jr and Jo Kretsinger of Kansas City, Mo., Bill and Alison Kretsinger of Liberty, Mo., Bob and Heidi Kretsinger of Kansas City, Mo, Ruth and Blake Dutcher of Lawton, Ok., Martha and Jason Ransom of Kansas City, Mo., Jamie Kretsinger of Kansas City, Mo., and Stephen and Christie Kretsinger of Kansas City, Mo.

Tom is also survived by 20 grandchildren who were a joy to him: Mary Wilhoit, Tom Kretsinger III, Bess Kretsinger, Ben Kretsinger, Will Kretsinger, Abigail Kretsinger Fink, Madelyn Kretsinger, Joe Kretsinger, Alex Kretsinger, Carrier Dutcher Norris, Joby Dutcher, Emily Dutcher, Hughes Ransom, Kathryn Ransom, Jack Ransom, Davis Kretsinger, Winton Kretsinger, Paul Kretsinger, Teddy Kretsinger and Sam Kretsinger, and five great grandchildren: Ian Wilhoit, Mira Wilhoit, Adam Wilhoit, Kate Norris and Nova Kretsinger.

Tom is survived by his cousin, Joan Williams, of Arnolds Park, Iowa, and a brother, Carll J. Kretsinger, Yankton, SD.

Tom leaves over 370 cherished employees and associates.

The family is grateful that Tom's suffering and his labor has ended and that he is now resting in heaven. Tom's was a long life well lived, an example for his family and others to emulate. Tom's impact on the world will live long after him.

A memorial service will be held at Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral, 413 West 13th Street in Kansas City on Sunday, March 9, at 2:00 pm. The service will be followed by burial in the Cathedral Memorial Garden and a reception for family and friends in Founders' Hall at the Cathedral. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions be made to Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral, Kansas City, Mo., or St. Alban's Church, Spirit Lake, Iowa. You may share a message with the family or sign an on-line guest book via www.parklawnfunerals.com (click on obituaries). Arrangements: Park Lawn Northland Chapel (816) 781-8228.