



## Ervin Radke

July 3, 1922 - January 10, 2012

Ervin Radke, longtime Corvallis resident passed away January 10, at home, of natural causes. Ervin was born July 3, 1922 in Benton Harbor, MI, to Adolph and Juliana Kraus Radke. His mother Juliana died when he was a young boy, his father re-marrying step-mother Emma helped complete a large family of 9 siblings. Ervin grew up in the 1930's Great Depression, shared stories of hardships and adventures with his brothers spending many childhood hours hunting and fishing to help feed the family.

During the Second World War Ervin was drafted March 10, 1942. At that time he was 18 and working in a munitions plant in South Bend, Indiana, producing shells for the war effort. He was proud to have been the youngest department head they had ever had at that plant. He was offered an exemption to stay at that position, but enlisted in the US Army's 96th Infantry Division. The 96th Division assembled and trained at the newly constructed Camp Adair north of Corvallis. His unit deployed to the Pacific theater to secure the Philippine Island of Leyte and later Okinawa. The 96th Division experienced some of the fiercest fighting during the war and casualties of 95%. Of the decision to forgo the exemption and enlist, he later said of the war experience, "It may have been the worst decision of my life".

After the war, Ervin returned to Corvallis to court and marry a young lady, Jean Davis, whom he met at a dance while stationed at Camp Adair. They married September 5, 1947. In 1950, Ervin and Jean purchased a small farm south of Corvallis where they raised a family of 3 sons. Ervin spent years fixing up the

house and grounds.

In the seventies, the second son Ed started some blueberry plants and with Erv's help planted them on that acreage to start a blueberry farm. Erv and his wife Jean spent the next 33 years growing and selling berries to many loyal blueberry enthusiasts who loved coming to Radke's Blueberries. Erv's family feels the small working farm kept him active and healthy late in life.

Ervin was preceded in death by siblings Gustave, Eric, Hilda, Elsie, Fred, Albert and half sister Ruth. He is survived by wife Jean of Corvallis; son Bill (Trudy) of Shedd, Ed (Janet) of Corvallis and Paul (Deann) of Portland; five grandchildren Jennifer, Scott, Karin, Carl, and Max and half sister Dorothy of Detroit MI.

Inurnment will be at Oakville Cemetery with a graveside service at 1:00 pm Tuesday January 17 followed by a gathering of reflection at the Oakville Church Fellowship Hall.

Memorial donations in Ervin's name may be directed to Doernbecher Children's Hospital or to a charity of your choice in care of McHenry Funeral Home 206 NW 5th St., Corvallis, OR 97330.

# Tribute Wall

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“ *Dear Jean and Family,  
We are so sorry to hear of Erv's passing. We love you and miss  
you. You are in our thoughts and prayers.  
Love,  
Tom & Nancy*

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**Tom & Nancy Edmondson** - January 12, 2012 at 08:22 PM