



Max E. "Gene" Smith, Jr.

1936 – 2019

Mr. Max E. "Gene" Smith 83, of Plainfield, IN, passed away on Tuesday, October 15, 2019. He was born in Fort Wayne, IN, on September 10, 1936, to Max E. and Lucille L. (Chastain) Smith, Sr. who preceded him in death. A 1954 graduate of Northside High School, Gene attended Indiana State, in Terre Haute, IN, on a music scholarship. Upon graduation, in 1958, he received a Bachelor of Science in Education, eventually accomplishing a Master's Degree in Music Education, also from Indiana State. Prior to graduation, Gene married his high school sweetheart, Barbara Beckman, who preceded him in death after a marriage of 61 years and a total lifetime together of 65 years. From 1954 to 1962 Gene proudly served in the 451st United States Army Reserve Band in Terre Haute. During this time he was first chair clarinet, drum major, and was eventually honorably discharged Staff Sergeant.

Upon graduation from Indiana State, Gene was hired as Assistant Band Director at Ben Davis High School, Indianapolis. In 1961 he became Head Band Director and Music Department Chairman at Fulton Junior High School where for 39 years he continued to give children, their children, and their children's children, the gift of music. A testament to Gene's dedication and commitment to the music department are the dozens and dozens of awards, firsts in contests, and the school naming a new auditorium and music wing, that Gene designed, the "Smith Music Complex." Gene judged band performances at the Indiana State Fair for over 45 years and was given the "Shining Star Award" by WTHR Channel 13 in 1997 for excellence in teaching. Additionally, he was also inducted into the "Who's Who of Teachers" in 2002. He was a member of Phi Beta Mu Sinfonia, Phi Delta Kappa, Indiana Bandmaster's Association, and Past President of Phi Beta Mu, and was inducted into Phi Beta Mu "Hall of Fame" in 2014.

Mr. Smith was an avid golfer and loved travel. He was an ardent fan of Notre Dame football, Indiana University basketball, and a 25-year season ticket holder of Indianapolis Colts football.

Survivors include his sons, Michael (Jennie Halliburton) and David (Yvonne) Smith, daughter Pamela (Dale Weitzel) Mosser, and sister Joyce Stanford of Fort Wayne. Six grandchildren, Ben

(Samantha) Smith, Eric (Amanda) Haze, Andrea (Jeremy) Quack, Brent (Sydney) Mosser and Brittany (Raymond Tyree) Weitzel and Roger Byassee, and fourteen great grandchildren. Gene was a 50-year member of the Plainfield United Methodist Church and services will be conducted by Pastor Elizabeth Gilbert. Plainfield, Visitation hours are 10:30 am to 1:30 pm Saturday, October 19, 2019 at Hampton-Gentry Funeral Home, 106 Shaw St., Plainfield, followed by the funeral service at 1:30pm.