



Ruben E. Smith

December 5, 1929 - April 28, 2016

Ruben E. Smith, 86 of Kankakee, passed away April 28, 2016 at Riverside Medical Center surrounded by his loving family.

Ruben was born in Chicago on December 05, 1929, to Joseph and Alfreda (Johnson) Smith. Ruben Smith grew up in the small town of Momence in a Christian home. The Smith's farmed grains and raised cows. Ruben graduated from Momence High School, where he played football and baseball. Ruben Smith served in the Army from 1951 to 1953, during the Korean Conflict. In the Army he enjoyed playing football and his delivery route by boat.

On October 29, 1955 Ruben married Bettie J. Skinner in Kankakee at the First Methodist Church. In 1957 their first son Bradford E. Smith was born. In 1963 Brett Allen Smith was born.

Ruben began Ruben E. Smith Construction, building homes in the Kankakee area. Ruben Smith was past president of the Kankakee Home Builders Association during the late 60's.

Ruben E. Smith Construction branched out into commercial building, which included Arby's, Ponderosa's, Wendy's, and Hardee's across the Midwest. In 1967 Smith opened his first Arby's in Michigan City, Indiana. Following this, he

opened a Ponderosa in Bradley, Illinois. From here he continued to build, own and operate several franchises including Arby's, Hardee's and Ponderosa's.

Ruben E. Smith and Ronald H. Kinzinger formed a union commercial construction company to build pre-engineered metal buildings in the Kankakee area. The company incorporated as Ruben E. Smith Const. and R&R, Inc. Today, the company is well known as R&R, Inc. Since, the company has developed into all aspects of general commercial contracting; including land development.

Ruben Smith was offered the opportunity to expand operations to West Texas with Ponderosa Steakhouses, where he built, owned and operated Ponderosas in El Paso, Texas. During this time he was also actively building commercial buildings closer to home.

Ruben E. Smith developed a franchise called Ranch Steak and Seafood, which he later sold.

He loved to travel to see the country, and the world, enjoying places like Egypt and the "Holy Land" as well as Hawaii. He liked hunting, fishing, boating, landscaping and the flowers in his yard. Every day he enjoyed the wildlife around his home.

Ruben enjoyed hunting and fishing throughout his life. He has traveled to hunt and fish in places like Africa, Russia, Alaska, Canada, and Mexico as well as, all over the United States.

Ruben was actively involved with his family. He loved and supported them in every aspect of their life, including traveling with his grandkids to horse shows.

Ruben Smith has been an involved member of Calvary Bible Church since

1959.

Ruben is survived by his wife Bettie of Kankakee, one son and daughter in law Brad (Nikki) Smith of Kankakee, two grandchildren; Abigail and Colton Smith of Kankakee. He was preceded in death by his parents, one son Brett Allen Smith and three brothers; Victor, Robert and Herbert Smith.

There will be a visitation Monday, May 2, 2016 from 3PM to 8PM at the Schreffler Funeral Home, Kankakee Chapel. There will be an additional time of visitation on Tuesday, May 3, 2016 from 10AM to 11AM prior to the 11AM funeral at Calvary Bible Church officiated by Pastor Joel Giles, Dr. John Bowling and Pastor Jeff Horsch. Burial will follow at Mound Grove Gardens Cemetery. Memorials may be made to Calvary Bible Church building fund or ONU Foundation.

Please sign Ruben's guestbook at www.schrefflerfuneralhomes.com

Cemetery Details

Mound Grove Gardens of Memory

1000 N Greenwood
Kankakee, IL 60901

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 2. 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Schreffler Funeral Home - Kankakee Chapel
1900 W. Court St.
Kankakee, IL 60901
(815) 932-2421
<https://www.schrefflerfuneralhomes.com/>

Visitation

MAY 3. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Calvary Bible Church
2587 E. Armour Rd.
Bourbonnais, IL 60914

Funeral Service

MAY 3. 11:00 AM (CT)

Calvary Bible Church
2587 E. Armour Rd.
Bourbonnais, IL 60914

Tribute Wall



“ *Ruben E. Smith*

February 03, 2023 at 04:30 AM



“ *My deepest sympathy to Brad and family on the loss of your dad and loved one. I was just looking at the photos of him when he was younger and can see Brad in them! May the Good Lord comfort you in this time of sorrow and may you be left with nothing but the best of memories and his love for you. I just learned of your loss from Nikki's friend Sue Conway.*

Bill Maass - May 24, 2016 at 03:56 AM



“ *Mrs Smith, Just wanted to let you know you are in my thoughts and prayers. You and your husband have touched so many. Thank you for loving me as one of those. Ruben is sitting at the feet of Jesus. What a blessing you are. God is carrying you right. Let Him. He is a BIG GOD. Susie Evans/ O' Hearn/ Clutter. :-)*

Susie Evans Clutter - May 07, 2016 at 01:58 PM



“ *Bettie and family. Dad talked to Dorothy last evening. He and Bessie are still doing pretty well. We have so many memories of you and Ruben at family reunions many years ago. We are so sorry for your loss. I'm glad that Dad and Bessie got to visit a little with him at Bob's memorial service last year. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all during this difficult time. Take care. The family of Fred Smith, Pontiac, Il.*

Susan flessner - May 04, 2016 at 07:05 AM



“ *Bettie & family,
Thinking of you all at this time and remembering Ruben and his
kindness.*

*Regards,
Margie Legris*

Margie Legris - May 03, 2016 at 11:33 AM

MM

“ *Dear Bettie & Family;*

*My deepest heartfelt condolences to you and your entire family.
Ruben was such a wonderful man and I am honored to say that I
knew him. I was so very young when he took a chance and hired
me to work in the office at Ruben E. Smith Construction & R & R,
Inc. His laughter could fill a room and his hugs could make the worst
days be ok. He was a father figure to me and I will always be
grateful for that.*

My prayers are with you at this difficult time.

God Bless,

MaDonna Benoit McLennan

MaDonna McLennan - May 03, 2016 at 10:55 AM

LI

“ *So sorry to hear of Rubens passing. He fought a valiant fight. Our
encounters over the years with Ruben and Betty will live in our
fondest memories. God rest your soul my friend, we will miss you.
Betty we hope to see you soon. Take care. Hugs.*

Les and Iris - May 03, 2016 at 04:56 AM

JL

“ *Julie Leary lit a candle in memory of Ruben E. Smith*



Julie Leary - May 02, 2016 at 09:04 PM

JL

“ *Our deepest condolences to Bettie and the Smith family. I will miss Rubens' smile and his friendly ways. A great man who always made me happy to be in his presence. Hugs for you Bettie* ♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

Julie Leary - May 02, 2016 at 09:04 PM

RM

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with Rubin and the family in this difficult time. Ronnie and the crew at Miller hydraulic.*



Ronnie Miller - May 02, 2016 at 06:20 PM

RM

“ *With deepest sympathy. Ruben was great to work with. It was a pleasure knowing and working with him.*

Randy McGill and Kankakee County Housing Authority

Randy McGill - May 02, 2016 at 03:55 PM

KL

“ *Ruben was a wonderful man and will be greatly missed.*

Kathleen Lightfoot - May 02, 2016 at 03:14 PM

RE

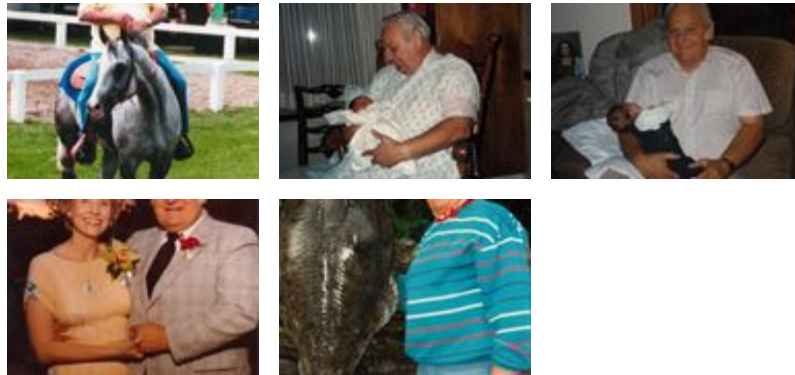
“ Our deepest sympathy to the family. Ray & Vickie Edwards



Ray Edwards - May 02, 2016 at 02:52 PM



“ 151 files added to the album LifeTributes



Schreffler Funeral Home - May 02, 2016 at 01:56 PM



“ Richard and Jeanie Darr and family , the employees Of Kankakee Glass send our prayers for comfort. Treasure the memories.

Sheryl Roesemeier - May 02, 2016 at 10:46 AM

FJ

“ My deepest sympathy to you Bette and your entire family. Mr smith always had a smile on his face and was a great person and to work for. You will be missed.

felicia johnson-labarge - May 02, 2016 at 10:45 AM

PH

“ We are so sincerely sorry for your loss Brad, Nikki, Colton & Abby, and to your mother/grandmother we send sincerest sympathy. Our thoughts and prayers will remain with each of you as you celebrate the Life of your father and grandfather. We regret we were unable to meet him. May all your wonderful family memories be your savior during this difficult time.

Don & Pam Hooper & Family

Pam Hooper - May 02, 2016 at 09:08 AM

JF

“ Your whole family, Bette, Brad, Nikki, Abigail and Colton have my sincere condolences on the passing of Ruben. He was a fine man, sincere and easy to work with. I am sorry I will not be able to attend the services for Ruben, homebound with a severe injury. I have nothing but fond memories of him. I shall never forget him. Joe Fritz

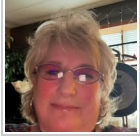
Joe Fritz - May 02, 2016 at 08:54 AM

JF

“ I will always remember sitting on the square in The Villages and talking to Ruben and Betty. He was always smiling and friendly. Our sincere sympathy to Betty and the family and will be in our thoughts and prayers.

Ron and Judy Francoeur

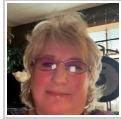
judy francoeur - May 02, 2016 at 08:52 AM



“ *Brad, Nikki and family I'm very sad to hear of your loss.. You all are in my thoughts and prayers*



Lexie Suë - May 01, 2016 at 10:33 PM



Alexia "Chambers" Helm

Lexie Suë - May 01, 2016 at 10:34 PM

KK

Betty and family, We are so sorry to hear of your loss. Rubin was such a great guy and his passing will be felt by many. You are in our prayers.

Kenny and Patsy Kreps - May 02, 2016 at 12:32 PM

TP

“ *I worked at Ponderosa 26 years ago and Mr. Smith and family were often present. He was such a nice man and treated the employees with such respect and kindness. So very sorry for his family!*

Trina Prouty - May 01, 2016 at 09:24 PM

DM

“ *We shared great times with Ruben and Bettie in Florida. Ruben was a wonderful man and a caring friend. He certainly will be missed. Loving thoughts to the family.*

Ron and Deena Meyer

Deena Meyer - May 01, 2016 at 04:00 PM

SB

“ We were so happy Ruben helped celebrate Tom's birthday on Jan19th at our home in Florida. We will miss his pleasantness and kindness. Prayers for all the family, as I know how hard it is, a hole in everyday life will take a long time to fill. So sorry we couldn't be there at this time.

Suzette Boldwin - May 01, 2016 at 01:43 PM

LH

“ Brad, Nikki, and Smith family....so sorry to hear of Ruben's passing....

lori morrical hoekstra - April 30, 2016 at 10:59 PM

PG

*Brad Nikki Colton & Abby so very for you families loss. He is walking with the Lord and all of you will meet again.
Love you.!! Pam*

Pam gaffney - May 01, 2016 at 09:17 PM