



## Edward Charles Toomer

May 23, 1920 - February 5, 2012

Edward Charles Toomer was born to Charles and Evelyn (Townsend) Toomer on a farm south of Newell, Iowa on May 23, 1920. Baptized and confirmed at the Nemaha United Methodist Church, Ed and his brother, Don, grew up on a farm north of Nemaha. He graduated from Nemaha High School in 1937. After a long, productive life Ed passed away at the age of 91 on February 5th at the Methodist Manor Retirement Community in Storm Lake. Following his graduation from high school and a couple of years spent working with Charles and Evelyn on the farm, Ed and several of his buddies drove to California where he worked at the Lockheed aircraft factory in Burbank. With the beginning of World War II, Ed joined the Army in 1942 and continued to work on airplanes in Kansas City with the 2nd Combat Cargo Squadron. He continued to serve his country in the Pacific Theater, India and Burma, receiving his honorable discharge in June, 1946. Those were busy years for Ed as he also was united in marriage in Coffeyville, Kansas on January 22nd, 1944 to Gail Lehmkuhl of Newell. They were stationed in McAllen, Texas where Gayle Ann was born in 1945 while Ed was in the Pacific Theater. Following Ed's discharge in 1946, they farmed north of Nemaha and Jerry Edward was born. In 1950 the family moved to a farm north of Newell where they lived for forty years. In 1990 they retired from active farming and moved to Storm Lake. Ed was highly involved in the community. He served as a member of the Albert City Elevator Board for 16 years and the Rural Electric Board for 14 years, and was also active as a leader at St John's United

Church of Christ and the boys' 4-H Club. He also served on the Methodist Manor Board for ten years during the planning and construction of Lake Pointe Villa and Otsego Place. Music was a passion and Ed enjoyed singing nearly anytime, anywhere! After returning from World War II, he and his brother, Don formed a barbershop quartet that sang throughout Northwest Iowa for several years. The quartet sang at the opening of the KAYL radio station while Ed also continued to sing for many years at church and other community events. He and Gail joined together to sing at numerous church functions over the years. Ed sang while riding the tractor, he sang to the milk cows or farrowing sows, while fixing machinery in his shop or nearly anywhere/anytime as he was inspired or as a song popped into his head. Ed and Gail loved dancing to big band music and were regulars in their early years at the Cobblestone Ballroom and in later years at Lake View on Sunday evenings. As a team, he and Gail passionately enjoyed the soil and farming: it was their life's work and they shared it fully. After retirement they enjoyed regular drives to the Nemaha and Newell areas to reconnect with the land, especially during planting and harvesting. Ed had a keen sense of humor and creativity that was also expressed through the characters that he displayed in the yard of their Storm Lake home. It was a busy corner that often featured a character or scene that Ed crafted to represent a particular holiday or event, often with a kind message to those who passed by. He was often rewarded with a honk or a wave by those who drove by. Ed will be fondly remembered as he endeared himself to many with his lively sense of humor, quick smile and positive attitude. He was preceded in death by his wife of 64 years, Gail; brother, Don and wife Vivian; grandson, Michael Edward Toomer and niece, Anita Coon. Cherishing his memory are his daughter, Ann and husband Larry of Novato, California; son, Jerry and wife Linda of Indianapolis, Indiana; grandchildren: Chris Toomer of Medan, Indonesia; Sarah Klaustermeier of Corona del Mar, California; Andrew and wife, Sarah Klaustermeier and great grandson, Maxwell of Bozeman, Montana; nephew and nieces: Greg Toomer, Valerie Toomer and Jennifer Lasota, several cousins and a host of good

friends. Memorials may be directed to the United Methodist Church in Storm Lake or the Buena Vista Regional Medical Center Hospice.