



Clarence William Thoma

November 25, 1919 - January 11, 2017

Clarence Thoma Clarence William "Bud" Thoma passed peacefully into the arms of his heavenly father and our beautiful mother Pearl on January 11, 2017. He passed surrounded by loving family, as he was for most of his life. A true member of the greatest generation, he was indeed a hero and wonderful husband, dad, grandpa, and a very proud member of the SeaBees. Bud was born in Chicago, Illinois November 25, 1919, to Clarence and May Thoma. He grew up in Oak Park, Ill. with sister Betty. He attended school there, played sports, and enjoyed music and dancing with friends. This was where he began his lifelong love of music, learning to play the trombone, accordion, harmonica, ukulele, piano, and organ, which he mostly "played by ear." He graduated from the Building Training Center, and followed in his father's footsteps in the electrical engineering industry. Bud began working as an electrical elevator mechanic at the Marshal Fields building in Chicago. He married his first wife, June Frei, in Chicago in 1941. She contracted tuberculosis while working as a nurse and passed away barely a year after they married. It was at that time Bud enlisted in the SeaBees, and served for three years in the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific with the 24th Battalion. He contracted malaria and was hospitalized in Oakland, where he met the next love of his life, Pearl Mae Jespersen, daughter of Senator Chris N and Jennie Jespersen. Pearl and Bud were introduced on a blind date and married in Paso Robles August 10, 1946. Pearl and Bud settled in San Luis Obispo so Bud could attend California Polytechnic State College. He graduated from Cal

Poly in electrical engineering in 1950, and went to work for Cline's Electric. In 1956, he and a partner started A-1 Electric. In 1959, based on principles of honesty and integrity, Bud and Pearl founded Thoma Electric Company, which remains today under the direction of their sons. Bud was involved in many civic and business organizations in the community. He was a charter member of the California Central Coast National Electrical Contractors Association, joining in 1962. He also belonged to the SLO Contractors Association and the SLO Chamber of Commerce. He was a member of the Kiwanis Club, the Elks Club, the Lion's Club, and the Masonic Lodge. He would often play the piano or organ at gatherings at many of the club meetings. Bud also belonged to Zion Lutheran Church and Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church. Family was always the most important part of life to both Bud and Pearl. They both always said they were rich in the things that counted, faith and family. Bud was predeceased by his loving wife, Pearl; his daughter-in-law Jennifer; his parents; and his sister. He leaves behind his loving children: Jean Usilton (John), Sheryl O'Neill (Jim), Bill Thoma (Linda), and Ed Thoma (Lori). Bud is also survived by 13 grandchildren and 1 great-granddaughter. The family wishes to thank Joel Wobrock and Deborah Cole for leading the amazing care-giving team at Bob and Corky's Care Home. We also thank Dr. Sainsbury, Dr. Morey, Dr. Tway and Dr. Bernard for their wonderful care. A private burial has already taken place. A Celebration of Life will be held at 11:00 am, Saturday, February 18, 2017, at Zion Lutheran Church in San Luis Obispo. Contributions in Bud's memory may be made to Chris Jespersen Society (3350 Education Dr., SLO 93405), the Jennifer Thoma Memorial Scholarship (550 Dana St, SLO 93401), Zion Lutheran Church (1010 E Foothill Blvd, SLO 93405), or a charity of your choice . Sign his guestbook at sanluisobispo.com/obituaries

Previous Events

Memorial Service

FEB 18. 11:00 AM (PT)

Zion Lutheran Church
1010 Foothill Blvd
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405
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<http://zionslo.com/>