



Lester I. Kastleman

January 9, 1926 - November 26, 2020

Lester "Papa" Kastleman was born just before the Great Depression in Louisville, KY on January 9, 1926, and passed away as a victim of the Coronavirus pandemic, in Houston, TX on Thursday, November 26, 2020.

The ninety-four years in between were filled with countless moments of joy and happiness, as his infectious smile, attitude and spirit would not allow for anything else. A veteran of World War II, he was part of a three-man cannon crew in the 75th Infantry Division, that was inserted into the Ardennes forest at the end of 1945, the Battle of the Bulge. He and his mates crossed the Rhine River and drove deep into Germany, becoming part of the historic American force that helped end the war.

Afterward, and after finishing at the University of Kentucky, he found his way to Houston in 1949. After a blind date, and a few years of cat and mouse, he married the love of his life, Estelle Ratner in 1953. The post-war boom was good to Lester, and after transitioning from the baby furniture business to commercial real estate, he had a career brokering and owning land, warehouses, shopping centers, and apartment complexes. Along the way, he racked up more close friends, and proteges, than most could dream of. Up until the pandemic, a friend would drive him to his weekly Monday "lunch bunch"- a group of close friends, most whom knew Lester for more than sixty years.

Lester stayed strong after the passing of Estelle in 2018. He fought his last battle for one week in Methodist Hospital, after testing positive for COVID-19. His doctors and nurses commented on his positive attitude and said that perhaps that could help him to recover. Sadly, the virus overcame the vitality.

In addition to Estelle, Lester was preceded in death by his brothers, Jerry and Mayer. He is survived by his son, Bryan and his partner, Cindy; daughter, Dr. Lynn Lunceford and her husband Terry; son, Jimmy and his wife Zuzana, Holly Moore and grandkids Ben, Olivia, Adam, Shea, Zuzi and Alexander.

His wishes of not having a service are made easy by the pandemic, and interment will take place at Emanu El Memorial Park on Sunday, November 29. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the: Kastleman Pediatric Fund at MD Anderson, (713) 792-3450.

Tribute Wall

PS

“ *We're so sorry for your loss. An American hero and member of the greatest generation, may his memory always be a blessing.* ”

Paige Smith - December 03, 2020 at 09:00 PM