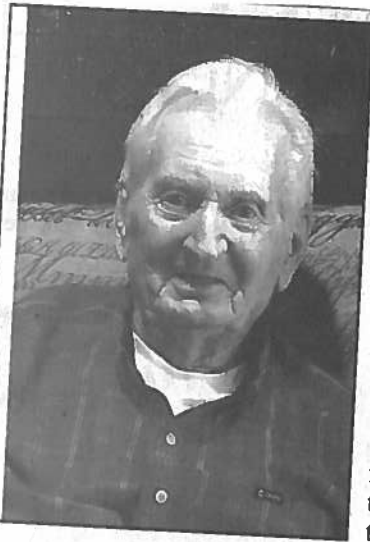


Record 5-3-2018



ELMER BAETHKE
Sept. 18, 1924 - Apr. 29, 2018

Elmer August Baethke, 93, (better known as Tobe or Red) passed away April 29.

Elmer was born Sept. 18, 1924 in Cresco. He was the third son of August Carl Fredrick Baethke, a German immigrant and his mother, Bertha Clara Elizabeth Koehn. He was baptized in the Lutheran faith in his parent's home in October of 1924 and confirmed on May 21, 1939 at St. John's Lutheran Church, Victor Township.

The family moved to Williamsburg when he was a boy, he attended Lutheran Parochial School where he learned to speak English and to use his right hand in the classroom. Elmer earned his nickname "Toby" thanks to the Toby and Susy traveling show. Both were little red-haired boys with freckles and full of mischief! The Baethke boys were avid hunters and trappers and Tobe became an expert marksman. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Tobe enlisted and found himself in the Navy Armed Guard where he was a gunner on the G. Harrison Smith tanker which carried fuel and supplies to the warships. Tobe was a 72-year member of the Keswick American Legion.

After his return from duty Tobe worked for the Keswick railroad but soon found a position as a mechanic with C.L. Whilite which he held for 40 years. Tobe was the best of mechanics for any International Harvester tractor or any "red" equipment. Fixing the knotter on a square baler was his speciality. For several years Tobe served on the Keswick Fire Department.

On August 28, 1948 Tobe married Marilyn Rose Cranston at the Sigourney Presbyterian Church. They made their home in Keswick for over 60 years. After Tobe retired he became a permanent fixture at Teet 'N Tobe's that he & his wife lovingly ran. Tobe was always good for a story, joke, or mischief for anyone who would either listen or fell victim too.

Tobe wanted a daughter born on his birthday so on September 18, 1954 his wish was granted. He named his birthday gift, Toni Corrine.

Tobe was preceeded in death by brothers, Merlin, Melbourne, Floyd and his sister Viola George.

Survivors are his wife of 69 years, Marilyn (Teet); his daughter, Toni (Doran) Hull of Gibson. Tobe's grandchildren, Heather Held of New Sharon; Ryan Hull of Barnes City and Natalie (JD) Reed of Oskaloosa. His four "little dudes" great grandsons, Corwin Hull, Spencer & Jacob Held and Simon Reed. One great granddaughter, Hazel Reed. Step-granddaughter, Victoria (David) Heady, Dayton, Tein & Nashlynn.

Funeral services will be held May 3, at 10:30 a.m. in Hope Lutheran Church in Sigourney with Reverend Richard Meyer officiating. Burial will be in Sorden Cemetery near Webster. Visitation will May 2, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in Bates Funeral Chapel, Oskaloosa and after 3 p.m. in the Hope Lutheran Church, Sigourney. The family will be present from 4-7 p.m. to greet friends and relatives. Memorials may be made to the Keswick What Cheer Fire Department or to Hope Lutheran Church.