Welcome to the memorial page for

# John "Pete" Phelps

August 7, 1926 ~ October 3, 2017 (age 91)



Pete was an avid storyteller, a charming gentleman, a soldier, a genuine cowboy and a voracious reader with a quick quip and a grin. He loved all kinds of pie, sugared orange candy slices and coffee. He loved to tell stories and he loved to laugh. Raised in Hillsboro, Iowa, he grew up the oldest boy in an Iowa farm family with 9 children. Pete was a combat veteran of the Korean War. He served as a Forward Observer and Acting Platoon Leader. He was awarded with the Bronze Star with "V" (valor) for heroic achievement.
Pete was a Ranch Manager at Santa Margarita for 30 years, awarded Range Manager of the Year in 1967, a founding member of the Arizona Quarter Horse Racing Association and awarded the President's Gavel 6 times. He bred and raced winning quarter horses. He loved his stallion Zircon most of all. He was a judge for the Western Livestock Show and traveled across the nation judging bulls. Shoo Fly, a western artist, drew Pete's portrait that was displayed in the White House during Reagan's presidential term and the Ronald Reagan Library. He often said, "all hat and no horse" if someone was not pulling their weight.
He was featured in the "Head for the Mountains" Busch beer commercials in the 80s and 90s. Pete will be dearly missed by all those who knew him. Pete carried with him, throughout the Korean War, the poem "A Psalm of Life" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Its last lines, "...Let us be up and doing, with a heart for any fate; Still achieving, still pursuing, Learn to labor and to wait."
Pete passed away at the age or 91 in Eloy, Arizona. Survived by siblings Ruth Noren, Lois (Leonard) Noll, Helen (John) Mathews, Mary Kongable, Thomas (Kumyea) Phelps, Bill (Leore) Phelps, Dave (Lonna) Phelps and 27 nieces and nephews. Preceeded in death by his parents, T. M. and
Sue Phelps, and sister Dorothy Miller. Please direct memorials to the Wounded Warrior Project.

Services were held in Iowa