



## Anthony Francis "Tony" Perry

April 25, 1931 - January 10, 2020

Anthony Francis "Tony" Perry, a longtime area developer and community leader, died peacefully on Friday, January 10, 2020 at the Manteno Veteran's Home, surrounded by his family. He was 88 years old. Tony was born on April 25, 1931 to Italian immigrants Anthony "Butts" and Laura (DePeso) Perry in Chicago Heights, Illinois. He attended high school at Marmion Military Academy in Aurora, IL, then served in the US Army, bravely and successfully protecting Fort Sam Houston military base in Texas from hostile foreign invasion. He then spent two years at St. Meinred Seminary in St. Meinred, Indiana, as he studied to be a Catholic priest. Meeting the daughter of more Italian immigrants, Elinore (Ellie) Rendina in Chicago Heights in 1952 caused him to reconsider his pending vows, and he then completed his formal college education at the University of Notre Dame, where he graduated Cum Laude in 1955. Tony and Ellie married in 1956 in Chicago Heights and started a family, which ultimately includes Elizabeth (Dan) LaMore of Hoffman Estates, IL; Lauren (Dennis) Wiley of Bourbonnais, IL; Thomas (Ricardo) Perry of Hollywood, CA; Joseph, of Chicago; and Anne (Eddie) Figus, of New Lenox, IL. The family extends to grandsons Luke Wiley, Nicholas and Braden LaMore, and granddaughters Hannah Wiley, Giovanna Perry and Reese Figus. Following graduation from Notre Dame, Tony, along with his brother, Sandy, operated his family's Chicago Heights wholesale beer distributing business. Following the sale of that business, he and Ellie moved the family to Kankakee in 1963 to mentor under Romy Hammes and develop Marycrest subdivision and commercial properties on Kankakee's east side. At that time and for many years, he also helped expand Peoples Bank and Marycrest Savings and Loan, as a member of the Board of Directors of those institutions. Over the next nearly 6 decades, Tony became one of Kankakee's most ardent community leaders as he expanded his commercial real estate business. He along with partners also developed many Kankakee area subdivisions, and Tony developed too many area commercial properties to count. For many years, his bright orange "Perry Commercial" signs seemed like they were on every corner. They practically were. In 1982, Tony, along with the Mayors of Kankakee, Bradley and Bourbonnais, created Area Jobs Development Association, a local, pioneering economic development agency, which was charged with converting the then vacant 800,000 square foot Bradley Roper plant into a incubator for small business. Tony led the mission of rehabilitating the

facility and then spent several years traveling the world to entice commerce and industry to not just the converted Bradley facility, but to the greater Kankakee County and Illinois area. As a member of the Chicago-based civic organization, Illinois Ambassadors, he accompanied two Illinois Governors in successful international trade missions to Europe and Asia. His enthusiasm and tenacity led to thousands of jobs being created over the years in the area. Continuing in his pursuit of a better community and desire to help those less fortunate, in 1991 Tony introduced Christmas in April to Kankakee County. From the first year, when the 3 houses were rehabilitated on just one day by a 100 volunteers, to his final year before handing the baton to others - almost 20 years later - when over 50 homes had major repairs completed by nearly 1,000 volunteers, this crusade was one of Tony's proudest and most rewarding achievements. Tony's accolades were not limited to Kankakee County. He was widely known in the Greater Chicago marketplace as "The Expert" for commercial real estate in the South Suburbs and was a member of the Board of Directors and served in other leadership positions for the International Council of Shopping Centers, The Certified Commercial Real Estate Membership, The Society of Industrial and Office Realtors, The Northern Illinois Commercial Association of Realtors, The Association of Industrial Real Estate Brokers, and many other professional organizations. In 2000, Tony was inducted into Illinois Senior Citizen Hall of Fame.

Besides promoting his community and courting new commerce to the State of Illinois, Tony enjoyed boating, snow skiing, traveling, financially supporting the many universities his children and wife attended (a/k/a known as tuition/room & board), Notre Dame football, testing Ellie's recipes that ultimately led to two published cookbooks, and spending time with his grandchildren. He loved to tell stories. Those that knew him well know each story well, and actually had reference numbers for them. They had to be true, for they never wavered in their storyline. And while Tony never actually was elected as a public official, he was considered the "Mayor" of Dock C of DuSable Harbor on Lake Michigan, as well as St. Joseph Avenue in Kankakee, and Guildford Drive in Bourbonnais. No one could break the speed limit on St. Joe or Guildford without being given chase by Tony in his massive Lincoln Town Car with the perfectly bleached white-wall tires. If it was ever determined that exposure to Westley's Bleach White leads to dementia, that would explain a lot. Tony suffered from Alzheimer's Disease late in life, which obviously impairs the memory. But he never forgot his need to support his community, and would often humor his family with recollections of Chicago Heights and Kankakee, the communities that shaped him, and in some manner, he helped shape. It recalls an earlier memory when Tony spent so much time talking about Kankakee at a national real estate convention that one woman at the same lunch table was heard whispering to her companion, "What's a kanka key?". There are so many citizens that never knew how his commitment and energy helped them and their community. Tony Perry was loved and will be missed by many. Visitation will be on Monday, January 13, 2020 from 4:00 P.M. until 8:00 P.M. at

Clancy-Gernon Funeral Home located at 295 Main Street NW in Bourbonnais. A funeral Mass will be celebrated on Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at 11:00 A.M. at Maternity B.V.M. Church located at 308 E. Marsile in Bourbonnais. In lieu of flowers, the family asks you to consider a donation to the Memory Care Unit at the Manteno Veteran's Home.

# Cemetery

---

## Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery

20953 Hoff Road  
Elwood, IL, 60421

# Events

---

**JAN** **Visitation** 04:00PM - 08:00PM

**13**

---

Bourbonnais - Clancy-Gernon Funeral Homes,  
Inc.

295 Main St., NW, Bourbonnais, IL, US, 60914

**JAN** **Funeral Mass** 11:00AM

**14**

---

Maternity B.V.M. Catholic Church

308 E. Marsile, Bourbonnais, IL, US, 60914

# Comments

---



“ Tony was an amazing man with endless energy. When I first met him, he was involved in at least 5 different real estate groups and was the pioneer for creating NICAR which is still so vibrant today. He was an incredible broker with unbeatable knowledge. Getting to know Ellie who was always at his side was a job. I use her cookbook! You will be missed deeply.  
Joyce Slone

**Joyce Slone** - 45 minutes ago

---



“ TONEY WAS THE BEST, A GREAT LEADER IN THE REAL ESTATE COMMUNITY AND A FELLOW " REALTOR 40" CHAIRMAN. A VERY GIVING, CARING AND GIFTED LEADER. A TRUE CAPTAIN OF HIS SUMMER HOME CRUSER. TONEY WILL ALWAYS BE REMEMBERED,, VINCE & HON VI DALEY

**VINCE DALEY** - January 18 at 07:15 PM

---



“ Tony will be deeply missed by all who knew him, worked, volunteered, boated, and served with him. He was one of a kind, a true humanitarian---big-hearted, generous, kind, funny, and deeply committed to the community. Blessings to you, Ellie, and your family. I am blessed to have known Tony and called him friend.

Jaymie Simmon

**Jaymie Simmon** - January 17 at 03:51 PM

---



“ Steve and I send our deepest condolences to you Ellie and the entire family. What a presence he was...so full of laughter and a big smile! He was such a good mentor for Steve. Hugs to you all. Stephen & Christine Rivard

**stephen** - January 15 at 06:43 PM

---



“ Janice Shenk lit a candle in memory of Anthony Francis "Tony" Perry



Janice Shenk - January 15 at 04:24 PM

---



“ May Tony rest in peace. He was a wonderful supporter of Realtors and I served with him in the commercial section of IAR and on the Northern Illinois Commercial Association of Realtors. We had many great times with Tony and Ellie at the Realtors 40 Club Christmas parties and member outings on his yacht. He was a great guy with some very firm ideas. He is missed!

Timothy O'Leary - January 15 at 12:58 PM

---



“ Brandy (Barham) Mygatt lit a candle in memory of Anthony Francis "Tony" Perry



Brandy (Barham) Mygatt - January 14 at 09:50 AM

---



“ Tony was the first to give me an office job. I was going to school at KCC during the night and working for him during the day. I remember when we had to show the old nursing home in Kankakee and I was scared to death. He looked at me and said its ok Im here with you. I said what are you going to do, you're shorter then me. And we laughed for days about that. That was one of many stories and jokes between us. He showed me and my children what it was like to help others with Christmas in April. He though small had the biggest heart I have ever know. He will be greatly missed. My condolences and prayers to the family.

Brandy (Barham) Mygatt - January 14 at 09:49 AM

---



“ Heartfelt condolences to the Perry family.  
Tony was a great customer, and always so willing to chat with me when I needed advice on something.  
Debbie M Joynt  
Chatterbox Cafe

Debbie Joynt - January 13 at 10:05 PM

---



“ Our condolences on your loss.



The Cantone's - January 13 at 09:21 PM

---



“ Thoughts and prayers for you Ellie and family! I have the fondest of memories from St. Teresa Church and my years at Marycrest Savings and Loan! RIP Tony! You are now smiling in the face of Jesus!

Irene Clements Granger - January 13 at 07:43 PM

---



“ Mr. Tony Perry helped so many people in this area including myself. He had a genuine heart for all people. You will be missed Mr. Perry!!



Kimberly Hudson - January 13 at 10:32 AM

---



“ Kimberly Hudson



Kimberly Hudson - January 13 at 10:28 AM

---



“ I remember being so completely and warmly welcomed as a guest in Tony and Ellie's home every single time I was there since high school. I regret I can't be there but it warms my heart to think of you all together in that same embrace now comforting Ellie. I was and still am in awe of such a great yet gentle man. He will be missed. The best and God's blessings to all family and friends. ....Roger

Roger Conrad - January 12 at 01:11 PM

---



“ He surprised our daughter and her friends for a ride in his limo for their Bishop Mac prom. He came to our house in his stretch limo and took the kids to prom. Of course he was wearing his chauffeur hat and a big smile. RIP Tony.

Diane and Clyde Richardson - January 12 at 01:12 AM

---



“ Spent many an hour with Tony And Mayor Hayes ; Tony was a very Giving Creative Man that could Sell Ice Qubes to Eskimo's! Loved his Dedication to Kankakee county and Bradley III. in particular! Tony Will always be Remembered In KankakeeCounty Illinois Fondly!

Dennis Bossinger - January 11 at 06:32 PM

---



“ My mother was Mary Mackler Leader. She grew up with Tony. She always talked fondly of Tony. She would be so happy when she was able to see him. I remember a time when Tony and Fred Bramonti had lunch with her at Skyline Restaurant in Chicago Heights, she was so happy. Ellie you and your family have my deepest sympathy. Love Jim Leader

Jim Leader - January 11 at 02:52 PM



“ I lovingly Called Tony “My Angel”!! He Came to My Rescue when I was still Living In Bradley...  
My Parents had Passed On & I was living on Disability(After Many Years of Working @ SDC). My water was Not Working ☐ Tony said Don't Worry about Anything!! Next Thing I knew They were In My Front Yard, Putting In City Water!! HALLELUJAH  
Every time I saw Tony after that He would Always Remember Me! Tony Helped SO MANY ☐ He has Made His Transition from “Earth Angel” to The Heavenly Realm!! ☐



Debra Fehr - January 11 at 11:48 AM



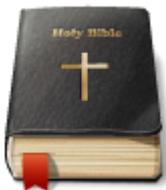
“ My deepest sympathy, thoughts, and prayers to Ellie and all Tony's family. Virginia R Nantista Dominick



Virginia R Dominick - January 11 at 11:42 AM



“ MR MRS sent a virtual gift in memory of Anthony Francis "Tony" Perry



MR MRS - January 11 at 11:24 AM



“ Dear Ellie and family,  
You are in my thoughts during this time of loss.  
-Mary Jane Cleeland, Sedona, AZ

Mary Jane Cleeland - January 11 at 09:00 AM

---



“ Don St.Germaine lit a candle in memory of Anthony Francis "Tony" Perry



Don St.Germaine - January 11 at 08:58 AM

---



“ Looks like God got another Angel back. What an impact he made on the community and beyond. He was always so positive in any conversation. Fond memories of High School days and the MG-TF he drove in the parades! May he always be remembered and bring a warm smile to your face.

HUGH JANDA - January 11 at 06:45 AM

---



“ HUGH JANDA lit a candle in memory of Anthony Francis "Tony" Perry



HUGH JANDA - January 11 at 06:40 AM

---



“ A cherished memory is when Tony took the Chamber Ambassadors on the Chicago River. We enjoyed terrific stories and a great feast provided by Ellie.

Condoglianze

~Larry Nona

Larry Nona - January 11 at 01:36 AM

---



“ Jessica Arseneau lit a candle in memory of Anthony Francis "Tony" Perry



Jessica Arseneau - January 10 at 10:31 PM

---



“ Chuck & Cheryl Stevenson lit a candle in memory of Anthony Francis "Tony" Perry



Chuck & Cheryl Stevenson - January 10 at 09:46 PM

---



“ Jaymie Falkenhan lit a candle in memory of Anthony Francis "Tony" Perry



Jaymie Falkenhan - January 10 at 09:44 PM



“ Eternal rest Grant unto him, O, Lord and may perpetual light shine upon him

Jaymie Falkenhan - January 10 at 09:45 PM

---



“ Tony was always good to my family, he did Christmas in April, made sure my kids had Christmas, and just an all around great guy. We lived in Hillcrest at the time he was always looking out for us & others in Hillcrest, he will always be remembered...

Jan Prayer - January 10 at 09:42 PM

---



“ Pat Schlenz lit a candle in memory of Anthony Francis "Tony" Perry



Pat Schlenz - January 10 at 06:52 PM

---



“ Another star in the sky tonight! May our Lord bless you and keep you!

John andd Joyce Soucie - January 10 at 06:45 PM

---



“ I met Mr. Perry when I was in my teens, many decades ago. He and his family took me into their home for a while. I was just a lost young girl, but they made me feel like one of the kids. As I remember him, he was very professional, a leader in his community, and absolutely devoted to his family, especially his beautiful wife, Ellie. He was one of those men who seem to be rare now. He had high standards for himself and his family. He made sure his children knew how to be gracious, compassionate, independent and financially secure. Even though it has been many, many years since I last saw him, I am 100% sure that he is in heaven right now. I pray that his family can take solace in that knowledge. Farewell for now, Mr. Perry. Please, if you can, send comfort to those who mourn for you right now. Thank you for all you did for that little girl a long time ago.

Tricia McCabe - January 10 at 06:08 PM

---



“ Such a joy to always be involved in a real estate transaction with Tony Charming and creative and always ready for a conversation. RIP Tony. You left your impact here!!  
Sympathy to the family

Debra Foulks - January 10 at 05:36 PM