

CMSgt Earl W. Francis

22 May 1922 - 5 April 2013



Earl William (Papa) Francis, age 90, was born on May 22, 1922, and was raised in Kansas City, KS. He enlisted in the Army National Guard in October of 1940; he was activated for one year, and was stationed in Little Rock, AR. After the Pearl Harbor attack, his unit was moved by troop train and spent New Year's Eve in the switching yards of Los Angeles. They were split up by companies and performed guard duty for Burbank, Glendale and Riverside Airbases. After a year they moved to Camp Hood in Texas for another year of training. Their equipment was stationed in San Francisco, CA, since they were to support the Pacific Theater, but plans changed so they were sent to NY for deployment to the European Theater. Earl, now with the 635th Infantry, journeyed to Liverpool, England, onboard the HMS Andes and landed on February 19, 1944. This gave them time to join the Normandy beachhead invasion on June 7th and 8th. By V-E Day (May 8, 1945), they were in Lambach, Austria. They were assigned the duty of guarding, feeding, and administering the P.O.W. cages. Following his time in the service, he worked for the US Army Air Guard for the next 25 years until he retired.

In 1983, Earl met his wife, Virginia, in Lourdes, France, on a Catholic tour of Europe. They fell in love, and were married one year later. Earl and Virginia enjoyed traveling back to Europe, as well as to Hawaii on several occasions. They also enjoyed RVing to many spots in New Mexico for a great many years. Earl was an avid flower gardener and enjoyed fishing. He proudly raised and saluted the US flag in the front yard every morning.

Earl was a parishioner of Holy Family Parish, and went home to be with Our Lord on the morning of April 5, 2013. Earl is survived by his wife, Virginia DeTevis-Francis; daughters, Diane Hoover and husband, Mike; Yvonne Aranda-Tafoya and husband, Joseph Tafoya; Denise Aranda and husband, Mike Garcia; son Daniel Aranda and wife, Rita; grandchildren, Michael and Angela Hoover, and Jared and Zoey Aranda-Tafoya; great-granddaughter, Catherine Hoover; brother Robert Francis and sister; Betty Corns; and many nieces and nephews.

Earl was a wonderful husband, father, brother, Papa, and friend and he will be missed greatly.