

## **Gene Cortese – BS 1956 Pharmacy**

Gene A. Cortese, 85 of Fargo, died under Hospice care, Friday Dec. 21st, in Rosewood on Broadway.

Gene was born in Hibbing, MN and moved to Fargo where he met Joyce (Daley) of Cogswell, ND, and they married in 1959.

Gene was an entrepreneur of many small business in the Fargo area. He was well known to the community for opening the first pizza restaurant in 1956 called "The Pizza Shop" located on the corner of Broadway and 3rd Ave. Many were drawn to the restaurant window where Gene could be seen tossing the fresh pizza dough. Gene took pride in developing his own crust recipe and crust manufacturing plant. Gene also owned "The Flame" bar across the street from "The Pizza Shop." Years later Gene opened a second pizza restaurant at the West Acres Mall. All of Gene's children attended Shanley High School in which he supported many fund raisers throughout the years. The students, parents, and staff would make pizzas in the gymnasium and were then sold into the community.

Gene attended North Dakota State University in which he studied pharmacy and played football. During the Berlin Crisis, Gene served as an Army National Guard Medic.

Gene is survived by his wife Joyce; his son Paul (Barb) of Fargo, his daughter's Cindy Cortese of Illinois, Cheryl (Kevin) McNeil of Connecticut, and Vicki (Jesse) Dawkins of Missouri; seven grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Gene will be remembered for his passion for family and good pizza. He would always ask a guest "did ya eat?" , and would never let them leave hungry.

A celebration of life will be held Jan. 19th, from 1-4 pm at Sammy's Pizza on Broadway in Fargo.