



## Mr George William Gastel

December 16, 1931 - October 17, 2015

George W. Gastel was a Renaissance man in every sense of the word.

Father, husband, son, businessman, metal worker, miner, student and chemist; George was all of those things and a self-made man.

He passed away Oct. 17, 2015 at his home with his family by his side. He leaves behind his wife of 61 years, Margaret; sons William, Michael and Robert; eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

George W. Gastel was born in Peiting, Germany on December 17, 1931, the youngest of five children. George's natural curiosity would lead him away from the family business early in life

He knew he did not want to be a butcher like his father, He wanted something else.

As it happened, his family lived across the street from a neighbor who was a metal worker so George's father worked out a barter deal with the man to teach George as an apprentice in exchange for free meat.

George's informal education in metal working would serve him well later. He founded Arrowhead Sheet Metal in 1969, naming his business after the famous Arrowhead landmark visible on the San Bernardino Mountains that framed the city. The San Bernardino-based company would later expand into the heating and cooling, both commercial and residential. George brought his wife and sons into the thriving business as partners. Eventually, several extended family members would find lifelong careers at Arrowhead Mechanical.

George left Germany for the United States in 1952. His residency depended on his being able to work in order to maintain a sponsored green card. He joined the Army; however, his Army career was short-lived as he was not allowed to remain enlisted because he was

not yet an American citizen. He would later join the United States Air Force, which allowed him to remain enlisted even though he was not yet a naturalized citizen. He was stationed at George AFB and would ride the bus to San Diego as many GI's would. It was on one of those fated bus rides that he would meet his wife, Margaret.

He was so flustered when he first saw her that he could not say a word; however, he arranged to sit next to her on the way back so that they could talk. Within two years, the couple was married. He would become an American citizen later that year, an accomplishment he was deeply proud of. The couple had three sons: William, Michael and Robert. George was close to his boys, heading Boy Scout troops and taking them off-road racing.

A self-taught miner and amateur chemist, he had no formal education until later on in life yet founded a thriving sheet metal business and taught himself English when he immigrated to America. Some of George's favorite pastimes were metal crafting and mining for gold and other precious metals.

"When I was taking chemistry in high school, my dad read my textbook and taught himself the basics of chemistry," Robert Gastel said. That was how he learned to coax the precious metals out of the rock and mineral he mined, his son said. He would later accentuate his lifelong learning with an associate's degree from San Bernardino Valley College and later, a certificate in Construction Management from Cal Poly Pomona, becoming one of the first to graduate under the university's new certification program.

When he wasn't working, George indulged his love of cooking, gardening, metal crafting and travel, often taking trips to Mexico with his sons. An aficionado of German beer and cuisine, he was equally enthralled with Mexican food and enjoyed dinners out at local Mexican restaurants. Well-known for his mischievous smile, twinkling eyes and handlebar mustache, George's sense of humor remained with him for life, often teasing his grandchildren and joking frequently.

"He'd say 'Grab your passport, we're going to Mexico!' "Robert said, and he would mean going to one of his favorite restaurant, The Mexico Cafe, for dinner.

# Cemetery

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## Montecito Memorial Park

3520 East Washington  
Street

Loma Linda, CA, 92354

# Events

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**OCT** **Visitation** 05:00PM - 06:00PM

**29**

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Bobbitt Memorial Chapel

1299 E Highland Avenue, San Bernardino, CA, US,  
92404

**OCT** **Rosary** 06:00PM - 07:00PM

**29**

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Bobbitt Memorial Chapel

1299 E Highland Avenue, San Bernardino, CA, US,  
92404

**OCT** **Mass of Christian Burial** 11:00AM - 12:00PM

**30**

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St John XXIII

222 E Easton St, Railto, CA, US, 92376

# Comments

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“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Mr George William Gastel.



October 29, 2015 at 05:41 PM

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“ Wendy Prado lit a candle in memory of Mr George William Gastel



Wendy Prado - October 29, 2015 at 05:15 PM

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“ Sending love and light to the entire Gastel family. Marisa Vice-Gonzalez



Marisa Gonzalez - October 29, 2015 at 11:24 AM

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“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr George William Gastel.



October 28, 2015 at 11:27 PM

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“ We will miss you George. Although we knew you for only a short time, we found you to be so warm and welcoming! You will be missed and remembered as a true gentleman.



**the Lepper Family** - October 28, 2015 at 10:45 PM

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“ George, thank you for being such an inspiring and special person in my life. I will miss our thought provoking conversations and of course your smile. Your genuineness and love with no conditions is what I admired most about you. I feel grateful to have known you and thank you for touching my heart. You are deeply missed by us all.

Our condolences go out to the Gastel family during this difficult time. Hold on to your memories...the laughs, stories, smiles, as they will help you get through.

With love Briana, Duncan and Caleb Telfer xoxo

**Briana Telfer** - October 28, 2015 at 04:13 PM

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“ Denise Gastel lit a candle in memory of Mr George William Gastel



**Denise Gastel** - October 27, 2015 at 11:31 PM

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“ Michael Gastel lit a candle in memory of Mr George William Gastel



**Michael Gastel** - October 27, 2015 at 08:23 PM

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“ George was a beautiful human being inside and out. I will miss our inspiring and thought provoking conversations and most of all that smile! He had a genuineness and touched my life and for that I am grateful. I am happy to have known and loved you. You are missed by us all.

Briana, Duncan and Caleb Telfer xoxo

**Briana Telfer** - October 27, 2015 at 05:54 PM

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“ George came regularly to the City of San Bernardino Senior Affairs Commission meetings. He was a champion for seniors needs and was a very compassionate person. I remember him counting and reporting on the street lamps that were out. He was concerned for seniors' safety at night on the streets.

**Shirley Harlan** - October 26, 2015 at 03:30 PM