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# Eli Spicer



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## ELI SPICER OBITUARY

**N**ovember 23, 2009  
SOUTH BEND - Eli Spicer, 95, died at 1:00 pm, Monday, November 23rd in South Bend. "Eli" as everyone knew him, was born in St. Paul, MN and moved to South Bend in 1936. He met the love of his life Elinor Freeman in South Bend and they married in 1940. They were a loving and golfing couple for 55 years before her death in 1995. Eli and Ellie had four children, Jeffrey (Darlene) Spicer of Niles, MI, Susie (Ed) Levy of South Bend, Shelley Bishop of Colorado Springs and John (Mindy) Spicer of

Edmonds, WA. Eli is also survived by 8 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren. Eli has one surviving sister, Ethel Katz, (St. Paul, MN) from a total of 6 children to Molly (Mechler) and Oscar Spicer. Another local relative that meant so much to Eli was his nephew David (Lynn) Fischgrund and family friend Pury Ararat. Eli moved to South Bend and sold ladies ready-to-wear clothing for a few years before entering the US Army during World War II. Before the war, Eli married Ellie Freeman. When they returned from being stationed in Colorado, Eli began his career at Sherman, Schaus Freeman Studebaker. With his father-in-law, Vic (Anna) Freeman, Eli purchased the dealership and renamed it Freeman-Spicer. At one point, Freeman-Spicer Studebaker, Mercedes, Peugeot was the largest Studebaker dealership in the world. After Studebaker left the South Bend area in 1963, Freeman-Spicer became a Chrysler, Plymouth, Mercedes, Peugeot dealership. Freeman-Spicer was one of the first 20 Mercedes dealerships in the United States. Eli left the automotive business in 1978, but continued in the finance and leasing business. He remained active in Freeman-Spicer Financial Services until his retirement in 2007. Eli was a long time member of Temple Beth-El and Temple Brotherhood, South Bend Country Club, South Bend Rotary and the South Bend-Mishawaka New Car Dealers Association. He spent many years volunteering for the St. Joseph County Humane Society and the Studebaker National Museum. Eli had many awards as a dealer from Studebaker and Chrysler. He was awarded the State of Indiana's highest award, The Sagamore of the Wabash in 2003, in conjunction with his induction into the Studebaker Hall of Champions. The family would like to thank the administration and the entire staff at Holy Cross Dujarie House, Notre Dame, IN for their wonderful care and friendship. These special people became very much a part of Eli's family. A small family funeral service was held Wednesday, November 25th. Welsheimer Family Funeral Homes assisted the family with arrangements. Eli was laid to rest next to Ellie at St. Joseph Valley Memorial Park. Memorial contributions may be made to the St. Joseph County Humane Society, Studebaker National Museum, Temple Beth-El or the donor's charity of choice.

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