



Louis Roderick "Rod" Ilse

February 11, 1927 - May 30, 2025

Louis Roderick "Rod" Ilse, 98, passed away peacefully on May 30, 2025. Born in Glendale, California, on February 11, 1927, to James Henry Ilse and Mildred Berry Ilse. Rod lived a long, full life devoted to family, community, and service.

Rod attended Redondo High School and later studied at the University of California at Santa Barbara. After moving to Texas, he earned a bachelor's degree in agriculture from the University of Houston. On January 1, 1955, he began his lifelong work on the Ilse Ranch.

A proud veteran, Rod served in the United States Coast Guard during World War II. He was an active member of the Elks Lodge, where he served as Exalted Ruler, and was a member of the American Legion.

In 1965, Rod married the love of his life, Elsie Trcka Tomanek. With that union came a blended family of six children, and together they welcomed their youngest daughter, Nancy. Rod embraced each child as his own, and he was deeply devoted to all his family, who lovingly called him daddy, grandpa, and papa.

Rod is survived by his beloved wife, Elsie, and his children: Nancy Ilse Popp (Craig) of Sugar Land; Carol Tomanek Treude (Karl) of Louise; David Tomanek (Brenda Jo) of El Campo; Kathy Tomanek McKay of Shenandoah; Patricia Tomanek Hollingsworth of Missouri City; Michael Tomanek (Brenda

Jean) of Fairfield; and Shirlene Tomanek Lowdermilk of Wharton.

He was a cherished grandfather to ten grandchildren: Elizabeth Popp Burgess (Henry), Jonathan Popp, Katie Tomanek Smith (Maverick), Trent Tomanek; Brandi Tomanek Toman (Bruce), Brandon Tomanek (Mackenzie), Greg Danielson (Shayla), Nathan Danielson (Kelly), Karianna Treude Ottis (Matt); and Jason Brooks (Emi).

Rod's legacy also lives on through his ten great-grandchildren: Brinley Toman; Cole, Hazel & Barrett Tomanek; Waverly & Wrenley Danielson; Iris Danielson; Andi & Jett Tomanek; and Cora Rose Ottis.

Rod was preceded in death by his parents, Mildred Berry Ilse and James Henry Ilse of Glendale, California; his brother, James Dixon Ilse of Wharton; his son-in-law, Bob Lowdermilk of Wharton; and his granddaughter-in-law, Brooke Tomanek of El Campo.

He was also preceded in death by his cousins, Ilse Miller and Nancy Miller of Columbus, Texas, and his nieces, Gretchen Ilse Waltz and Linda Ilse.

Visitation will begin at 9:00 AM on Monday, June 2, at St. John's Catholic Church in Taiton, Texas, with a Rosary recited at 9:30 AM. The funeral Mass will follow at 10:00 AM, with Reverend Gabriel Oduro Tawiah officiating. A military tribute will be held immediately following the Mass, in honor of Rod's service to our country.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the remarkable caregivers who touched Rod's life with compassion, dedication, and kindness. Your care and presence meant the world to him and to our family.

A special thank you to Dr. Joe Galati and Dr. John Vanderzyl for their outstanding medical care and unwavering support throughout the years. We are deeply grateful to Rose Martin and Robin Sless for their compassionate

and attentive daily care, which brought comfort and dignity to Rod's days. In his final moments, Kim Wishert and Annie provided gentle and reassuring comfort care—we are profoundly thankful for your presence during that time. Your love and support will never be forgotten.

Rod's life was a testament to love, loyalty, and quiet strength. He was a gentle and humble soul who acknowledged every kind deed with a heartfelt thank you. Rod will be deeply missed by all who had the joy of knowing him.

Memorial donations in memory of Rod may be made to Wharton County Library – El Campo Branch.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 2. 9:00 AM (CT)

St. John's Catholic Church
1843 Co Rd 469
El Campo, TX 77437
(979) 543-6985

Rosary

JUN 2. 9:30 AM (CT)

St. John's Catholic Church
1843 Co Rd 469
El Campo, TX 77437
(979) 543-6985

Funeral Mass

JUN 2. 10:00 AM (CT)

St. John's Catholic Church
1843 Co Rd 469
El Campo, TX 77437
(979) 543-6985

Tribute Wall

VQ

“ So sorry for your loss! Please know Elsie your family are in my thoughts & prayers! God bless you & your loved ones! RIP Rod ☐! He will be dearly missed by everyone who knew & loved him! Vicky Blair Ustynik Quijas



Vicky Quijas - June 02, 2025 at 10:21 PM

PH

“ Patricia Tomanek Hollingsworth lit a candle in memory of Louis Roderick "Rod" Ilse



Patricia Tomanek Hollingsworth - June 02, 2025 at 10:16 PM

JS

“ Judy Sefcik lit a candle in memory of Louis Roderick "Rod" Ilse



Judy Sefcik - June 02, 2025 at 07:38 PM

LG

“ Linda Garcia lit a candle in memory of Louis Roderick "Rod" Ilse



Linda Garcia - June 01, 2025 at 10:06 PM

TT

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your loved ones. We hope the memorial trees will bring you peace. Love Donna and Duane, Paul Allen and Trish

Trish Trcka - June 01, 2025 at 08:14 PM

JZ

“ Jo Ann Zernicek lit a candle in memory of Louis Roderick "Rod" Ilse



Jo Ann Zernicek - June 01, 2025 at 04:20 PM

VQ

“ Vicky Quijas lit a candle in memory of Louis Roderick "Rod" Ilse



Vicky Quijas - June 01, 2025 at 03:37 PM

DL

“ Donna L. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Louis Roderick "Rod" Ilse.

Donna L. - June 01, 2025 at 10:09 AM

KK

“ Kathryn Krpec lit a candle in memory of Louis Roderick "Rod" Ilse



kathryn krpec - May 31, 2025 at 09:50 PM

MS

“ Marti Setera lit a candle in memory of Louis Roderick "Rod" Ilse



Marti Setera - May 31, 2025 at 03:47 PM

KH

“ Karen/Sheldon Holub lit a candle in memory of Louis Roderick "Rod" Ilse



karen/Sheldon Holub - May 31, 2025 at 03:14 PM

DN

“ Our condolences to the family. Also his caretakers.



Debbie Green Nelson - May 31, 2025 at 10:31 AM

GR

“ We send our deepest sympathy to the Ilse family. May the Lord surround you with His love and strength.



Gerald & Neta Ripple - May 31, 2025 at 10:08 AM