

Charles "Doc" Early, 92

Oct. 23, 1923 - Aug. 7, 2015

HARLAN — Charles Morris Early (Doc), died Friday, August 7, 2015. Born October 23, 1923, in Arkansas City, KS, he was the eldest son of Frank and Faye (Hinton) Early. He went to Utah as part of the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1940 and returned to his home in Sturkie, AR, to graduate from Viola High School in 1942. He joined the U.S. Navy and served as a ship's cook 2nd class aboard the USS Raton. He received an honorable discharge in 1945. He attended Arkansas City Junior College where he met the love of his life, Janet Estelle Brown. They married June 13, 1948, in Arkansas City, KS.



Doc went on to graduate from Kansas State University in Manhattan, KS, in 1954, with a doctorate in Veterinary Medicine. The first two of their five children, Richard John and Patricia Charlene, were born there. The family moved to Palmer, NE, where a third child, Katherine Anne was born. In 1956, Doc moved his family to Harlan, and started practicing veterinary medicine. He and his wife added two more sons, William Thomas and Steven Paul, and the family was complete. Doc really fell in love with Harlan and Shelby County. He served as a City Councilman, and was on the County Board of Supervisors. He was a member of the Shelby County Fair Board and Concerned, Inc. He and his wife were charter members of the First Baptist Church where he also served as a Deacon and member of the choir. He attended several "March for Life" events in Des Moines. He was an active band parent for the HCHS band. He enjoyed gardening and jigsaw puzzles. As part of his rehab following heart problems, he rode tandem with his son, Bill, in RAGBRAI in 1995 and 1998. A lifelong Cardinals baseball fan; Doc was also a shareholder in the Green Bay Packers.

He had an amazing capacity to love. He loved God, his wife, his family, helping people, animals, Harlan, Shelby County, Iowa, the soil, cornbread and beans, pecan pie, and a good cup of coffee. He especially loved holding hands with his dear wife.

Doc was preceded in death by his parents, three brothers, Richard, Merle, and Louis, and one grandson, Jedidiah. He is survived by his sister, Alma Ruth Sanders of Salem, AR, his wife, Janet, and their children, Richard (Jennifer) Early of Des Moines, Patricia (Dave) Larsen of Burke, VA, Katherine Baxter of Mukilteo, WA, Bill (Sara) Early of Harlan, and Steve Early of Harlan. His grandchildren, Martha, Sam, Graham, Colin, Kenneth, Tom, Gabe, Hannah, and Matt and great-grandchildren, Lucy, Alex, Eva, and Ferris also mourn his passing.

The memorial service was held on Friday, August 14, 2015, at the First Baptist Church in Harlan, with Father Glenn Rankin officiating. Serving as the musician was Helen Warren. The family requests, in lieu of flowers, a donation be made to the ASPCA at their website, <http://www.asPCA.org/donate>.

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