

Dr. Herbert J. Herbert, 87

March 31, 1921 - Feb. 8, 2009

ELLENSBURG, WA — Dr. Herbert John (Kwapiszewski) Herbert, 87, passed away Sunday evening, February 8, 2009, at his home surrounded by his beloved family at his side.

Dr. Herbert was born in Panama on March 31, 1921. He is one of six children to Frederick and Caecilia Kwapiszewski of German and Polish descent and was reared on their family farm. He is an Alumni of St. Mary's School in Panama. He attended Creighton University in Omaha, NE and graduated from medical school in 1945 where he also received a commission in the U.S. Navy. His internship was in the U.S. Naval Hospital in Bremerton, WA. Upon completion, he served as a medical officer with the naval occupational forces in the South Pacific.

Returning to the states in 1948, he pursued a three-year post-graduate training in eye, ear, nose and throat at the University of Illinois in Chicago. He began his practice in Omaha, NE in 1951 at which time, due to the difficult spelling and pronunciation of his last name, Herbert change his last name for professional reasons. With the request of his mother, she gave her blessing to do so to the name that she gave him, Herbert.

He met his wife, Rita, in surgery in 1953, as she was a student nurse assigned to assist his surgical case. After two years of courtship, they were married on December 31, 1955, in Omaha, NE. Their family consisted of eight children, four of which were born in Omaha, Charles, Kathleen, Michael, and Nancy. Having fond memories of the northwest from his days in Bremerton, they decided to make the move to Ellensburg, WA in 1960 to begin his practice. It was here where the remaining four boys were born, Mark, Paul, John, and Joe. Michael died shortly after birth in Omaha before moving to Washington, and Charles to leukemia at age six in 1962.

Dr. Herbert's first 13 years of practice was upstairs in the Land Title Building, followed by establishing the Ellensburg Eye-Ear-Nose-Throat Clinic in 1973. He served the community of Ellensburg, WA for 36 years before retiring in 1996 and received his well-deserved Recognition Pin for 50 years of Medical Practice.

In 1970, they moved to their present address northeast of town, a home that was personally designed by Dr. Herbert for his large family. Wanting to instill the same work ethic in his children, which he grew up with as a child, it was here where Dr. Herbert began to build his "Kingdom" with his wife and children. Beginning with a large sheep operation and a few horses, his children were encouraged to join 4-H. Years later, he got back to his roots by ranching cattle, and soon after, harvesting timothy hay on his 146 acre property. His true love will always be the times he spent on the tractor in his fields and traveling throughout the northwest with his wife in their motor home.

Herbert is predeceased by his sons, Charles and Michael. He is survived by his wife, Rita; daughters, Kathleen (Paul) Buntain and Nancy Grossman, both of Ellensburg, WA; sons, Mark Herbert, Joe Herbert (Darlyne); Paul Herbert of Seattle, WA; and John Herbert (Juanita) of Spokane, WA; sisters, Helen (Ray) Rennemeyer and Edna (Bill) Henderson, both of Colorado; and brother, Leonard Kwapiszewski (Kaihy) of Panama; and 11 grandchildren.

Visitation was held at Stewart & Williams Tribute Center in Ellensburg, WA, Friday, February 13, 2009, from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m. Following was a Recitation of the Rosary at 7:30 p.m.

Dr. Herbert's Mass of Christian Burial was Saturday, February 14, 2009, at St. Andrews Catholic Church in Ellensburg, WA, at 11 a.m. followed by final interment with full military honors at Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in Ellensburg with Father Semus Kerr officiating. Casket bearers were the Knights of Columbus.

