

Longtime Harlan publisher Leo Mores died Wednesday

HARLAN -- Two weeks to the day of his wife Irene's passing, longtime Harlan newspaper publisher, Leo Mores, 90, died at Myrtue Memorial Hospital in Harlan on Wed., Oct. 6, just six days short of his 91st birthday. He was only the fifth editor/publisher of the Harlan Tribune, which began operations in 1879.

Services are Friday, October 8 at 10:30 a.m. at St. Michael's Catholic Church. Visitation will be at Pauley Jones Funeral Home on Thurs., Oct. 7 from 4 pm - 6:30 pm; family will greet friends from 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm with a wake service at 7 pm.

Mores was born on October 12, 1913, in the Iowa coal mining town of Seymour in Wayne County.

His father, Peter, was an Italian immigrant coal miner from Arise, Italy, who died when Leo was eight years old. He and his younger sister, Julia, were then raised by their mother (Marie Cambruzzi Mores, Fonzaso, Italy) and their many uncles and aunts.

Newspaper career

Mores's newspaper career started as a carrier for the Des Moines Register in the

Mores please see page 12A



eighth grade, and he later started work as a printer's devil at the Seymour Herald. He worked there through high school, often getting to class late after having been up all night on press night hand-feeding the newspaper press. He briefly worked in the coal industry and learned that to succeed, he would need a college education.

He started at Iowa State in 1933 with \$300 in his pocket and five years later graduated with honors. He earned money as the night foreman of the Iowa State student newspaper and Collegiate Press. He also served four years as the student newspaper's business manager, and was also business manager of The Green Gander, a campus humor magazine. On weekends, he worked at Carter Press, an Ames commercial printer.

In college, he was a member of Pi Kappa Phi social fraternity, president of Sigma Delta Chi journalism honorary and a member of Cardinal Key honorary.

Mores had determined during his high school days, that he wanted to go into the weekly newspaper business. Upon ISU graduation in 1938, he became associated with Nebraska-publisher Mark Cramer and was named the advertising manager at the Rockwell City (IA) Advocate.

Six months later in 1939 he co-purchased the Harlan Tribune with Cramer. It was during that time he began dating his future wife, Harlanite Irene Frederickson.

They practiced ecumenism long before it was popular in Shelby County -- as a Baptist, she married Leo, a Catholic, on June 16, 1942. Leo served in WWII stationed in Iowa and upon return from military service in 1945, Mores purchased the competing newspaper - the News-Advertiser, and the operation then became a twice weekly newspaper, each keeping its own masthead.

Ownership

Leo and Irene took complete ownership of both newspapers in 1958.

Under his guidance, the Harlan Newspapers won more than 225 state and national publishing awards and were one of the first Iowa newspapers to embrace offset printing and desk-top publishing. The firm is now a central offset plant printing for 13 area newspapers and dozens of other publications. Also under Leo and his sons' guidance, the company began offering commercial printing, marketing services, office supplies, color copying, a city cable TV channel and graphic design. What used to be a 5-employee plant now has 29 employees.

Other newspaper ownership

Over the years, Mores's past part-ownership in other newspapers has included the cities of Avoca, Audubon, Glenwood, Guthrie Center, Pella and Storm Lake, where as a silent partner, he furnished financing and direction for beginning publishers.

His impact on journalism can be

seen in the number of journalists he has provided training and guidance for in Harlan, who then have gone on to being successful publishers. They include: Dick Gilbert (Eagle Grove, Gov. Robert Ray's press secretary, Des Moines Register publisher, Pioneer Publications CEO, Park Communications CEO, now investment banker in Chicago).

Dick Barton (Glenwood and Pella), Dick Plum (Algona and West Virginia), Charles Gonzales (Guthrie Center), Bill Sniffin (chain of newspapers in Wyoming & Hawaii), Paul Bunge (Osage), Don Schmidt (chain of South Dakota & Wyoming papers), the late Jerry Davis (Independence), Connie Johnson (Oregon publisher), Dennis Buckley (Lincoln, NE), Bill Albrecht (St. Cloud, MN), LeRoy Zimmerman (Washington state publisher) and also his sons, Steven and Alan Mores.

Honors or awards he received include:

- 1959: received Harlan's Citizen of the Year
- 1964: received the Iowa Press Assoc.'s Master-Editor-Publisher Award
- 1986: received Harlan's Community Service Award
- 1988: received ISU's highest journalism honor - the J.W. Schwartz Award for distinguished service to the field of journalism
- 1990: initiated the Mores Family Community Journalism Scholarship at the Greenlee School of Journalism at ISU.
- 1996: named to the ISU Greenlee School

24



Leo Mores is shown in a circa 1940's photo at the Harlan Newspaper offices at 1114 7th St. -- likely getting a news story, selling an ad or discussing Shelby County's growth opportunities with a fellow Harlan businessperson. Mores was a tireless supporter of his community and the community newspaper industry.

of Journalism Advisory Board.

Other activities:

- Limited partner in ISU's Gateway Center, Convention Center complex.
- Member, President's Circle, Order of the Knoll, Iowa State Univ. Foundation
- Board of directors, Harlan National Bank for more than 25 years.
- Shelby County's first Mardi Gras King (1954).
- American Legion, 60-year member

- St. Michael's Catholic Church & School, fund drive co-chair (1954).
- Knights of Columbus, 50-year member.
- Community Library, fund drive co-chair.
- Harlan Building Corp., charter member

Burial will be in the Harlan Cemetery. He is survived by his four children: Steve (Michelle) Mores, Harlan; Barbara (Martin) Johnson, Glen Ellyn, IL; Suzie (Herb) Laney, Hinsdale, IL and Alan Mores (Donna Christensen-Mores), Harlan; grandchildren: Marc (Jennifer) Mores, Fairfield, OH; Michael (Cathy) Mores, Ames; Brad Johnson, Oakland, CA; Matt Johnson, Glen Ellyn, IL; Phil Johnson, Boston, MA; Scott and Jordan Laney, Iowa City; Jackson and Chandler Mores, Harlan; great-grandchild, Ashley Mores, Fairfield, OH; many other cousins, nephews and friends. Survivors also include: sisters-in-law, Bernadine K. White, Harlan and Sally Frederickson, Birmingham, AL.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Irene, who died on Sept. 22, 2004; sister, Julia Kania, and parents, Peter and Marie Mores.

Memorials may go to St. Michael's Catholic Church Foundation, Iowa State Univ. Greenlee School of Journalism and the Iowa Newspaper Foundation.