



Richard Joseph Blenz

August 21, 1924 - July 9, 2018

It is with great sadness that we learn of the passing of our dear friend to thousands, Richard Joseph Blenz. Richard passed in a quiet and very dignified manner on the evening of July 9th, 2018 while a resident of Meadowood Recovery Center. Richard was born on Thursday, August 21, 1924. He was born at South Shore Hospital in Chicago, Illinois. His mother was, Mirgia nee Johnston Blenz, a descendant on Mayflower settlers. His father, Joseph Richard Blenz who immigrated to the USA at age 12.

Richard was raised in East Chicago, graduating from Washington High School in 1941. Richard's interest in electronics mapped his path through his WWII experience. Richard worked in radar, specifically, enemy radar jamming.

Richard was assigned to England in November 1944, making the trip Thanksgiving week on the Queen Elizabeth. His assignment was the 8th Army Air Wing, 100 Bomb group, stationed at Thorppe-Abotts.

After war service, he attended Purdue for a short time. Richard trained as a Boy Scouts of America executive assigned in Michigan.

Returning to electronics, Richard worked for over 15 years at the University of Chicago in upper atmosphere microwave research. This job was to prove that space could be explored safely.

Richard's interest in caves developed in the 1950's. He was a co-founder of the Windy City Grotto of the National Speleological Society (NSS). Richard's favorite location for exploration was Bloomington. He purchased land west of Bloomington with Buckner's Cave. Over the decades, he was host to 10's of thousands of guests to his property.

Richard was a 40-year employee of the Indiana University Department of Physics. Richard worked for Ivy Tech, being proud of having worked at all of the Bloomington Ivy Tech locations.

Richard was a very generous man. He supported several groups locally and nationally. He was most proud of support of the NSS and Wonder Lab.

Richard has no family survivors, but a vast friend base of many thousands.

Visitation will be held on Thursday, July 19, 2018 from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Allen Funeral Home and Crematory, 4155 S. Old State Road 37, Bloomington. A funeral service will be held on Friday, July 20, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. Burial following at Valhalla Memory Gardens with Military Honors. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the National Speleological Society, Wonder Lab, or a charity of the donor's choice in Richard's memory. You are invited to share a memory or leave an online condolence at www.allencares.com

Cemetery Details

Valhalla Memory Gardens

310 North Johnson Ave.
Bloomington, IN 47401

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 19. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory
4155 S. Old State Road 37
Bloomington, IN 47401
(812) 824-5905
<http://www.allencares.com>

Service

JUL 20. 1:00 PM (ET)

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory
4155 S. Old State Road 37
Bloomington, IN 47401
(812) 824-5905
<http://www.allencares.com>

Tribute Wall

WO

“ Dick was a great person and friend to many cavers. I met him when I was in high school when my High School Spelunking Club visited Buckner Cave. Over the years we became friends. He is deeply missed.

William James Ott - March 31, 2024 at 07:03 PM

MS

“ I just learned that "Dick" passed away. What a life he lived. I first met Dick while I was in high school (1979). My friends and I would spend many of our weekends camped out on his property, caving and talking about electronics. Every once in a while Dick would go caving with us, or just hang-out and share some exciting caving stories. When I got my first computer (Heathkit), Dick was incredibly helpful in getting me up to speed. I can see why he was such an excellent teacher. When my car broke down one weekend on his property, it was Dick to the rescue.

Over the years (40) I would bring my children and friends to Buckner's. When Dick was there, he would always stop and say hello, invite us in - just a wonderful person. The picture in his living room (Queen Blair) was given to him by Steve Nelson and I. We both worked hard to make that picture and Dick had it in his living room, proudly displayed - from the time we first gave it to him. This property and "Dick" will always be special.

Mark Sachs

mark sachs - July 16, 2019 at 02:59 PM

DW

I agree with you, he was for real. I knew him from IvyT and IU. When I told him I found a job as a librarian w ca dept of corr he pulled out his check book and wrote a check for a thousand dollars. He did a lot more. Don Wendell.

Donald Wendell - April 27, 2020 at 01:08 PM

RI

“ He was my electronics instructor at ivy tech back in the early eighties, one of the best I ever had. It’s hard to say how many people’s careers were improved under his instruction but I know mine was. He was a good man.

Rodney L. Ira - July 16, 2018 at 01:18 PM



“ Lavender & White Sympathy Basket was purchased for the family of Richard Joseph Blenz.



July 16, 2018 at 10:07 AM

KB

“ We are so sorry to hear about Dick’s passing.rest in peace our friend.

kimberly byers - July 15, 2018 at 11:45 AM