



Smith Higgins

April 1, 1920 - December 27, 2014

Smith Higgins passed away peacefully, surrounded by loved ones, on Saturday, December 27th. Smitty was born and raised in Nunda, NY, where he graduated from Geneseo State Teachers College in 1942. After US Naval Midshipman training at the University of Notre Dame, he served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy. He commanded PT Boat 65 during the Solomon Islands campaign and later served aboard the heavy cruiser USS St. Paul, and was on board in Tokyo Bay at the signing of the Japanese surrender.

On October 7, 1943, while on leave, he married Anna M. Thoner and after the war, he returned to South Bend, Indiana where she and a newborn son awaited him. He spent the next many years raising a family, with three more children to follow while pursuing his education in mathematics, receiving a Master's Degree in 1947 and a Ph.D. in 1955 from the University of Notre Dame.

Dr. Higgins enjoyed a long and successful career at Indiana University, beginning in South Bend teaching mathematics, but moving quickly into administration and holding many positions in South Bend, Kokomo and Bloomington, among

them - Academic Counselor, Dean of the Division of Regional Campuses, Associate Director of the Honors Division, High School Coordinator for the School of Mathematics, and finally Associate Professor of Mathematics - until his retirement in 1985. He was lauded by his contemporaries for his excellence in teaching, his inexhaustible patience, his clarity, and his sincere interest in the welfare of his students. But his greatest contribution to the University came during his tenure as Dean of the Division of Regional Campuses. In fact, he is known as the "father of the regional campus system". Under his leadership he transformed those early extensions to the full four-year institutions we know today. His tireless efforts and stewardship clearly left their mark on the state-wide development of Indiana University.

In his free time, Smitty was always an outdoor enthusiast. His tree farm and grape arbor on the outskirts of Bloomington was a model of zeal, optimism, and imagination. He was one of the first locals to provide grapes for the then up-and-coming Oliver Winery. He pursued an active retirement full of the things he loved most - hunting, fishing, and travel, was an active member of the 'Y', played racquetball and exercised there well into his eighties. He was active in his church community, helping select the land where Faith Lutheran now resides, serving on many committees, and rarely missing a Sunday service.

His wife Anna passed in 1996, and shortly thereafter he fell in love with Marcia Sue Shaver of Bloomington. The two married on March 17, 2001 and he lived out the remainder of his days as her devoted and beloved husband.

Smitty is survived by his wife, Sue of Bloomington, IN and his four children, Smith Higgins, Jr. (Mary Sue) of Indianapolis, IN; David C. Higgins (Mary) of Bloomington, IN; Kathleen A. Bridwell (John) of Bloomington, IN; and Daniel B. Higgins (Cathy) of Carmel, IN. He is also survived by 7 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews. He will be sorely missed by all those who knew and loved him.

The family wishes to thank the caregivers at Sterling House, Garden Villa, Bloomington Hospital, and Hospice House.

Friends and relatives are invited to attend his calling from 2-6pm Sunday, January 4th at Allen Funeral Home in Bloomington. Funeral Services will be held on Monday, January 5th at Faith Lutheran Church at 11 am, with interment immediately following at Valhalla Memory Gardens with military rites conducted by the Monroe County Veterans Honor Guard.

Contributions in his memory may be made to Faith Lutheran Church.

Tribute Wall

TA

“ *Kathy and family - we are so sorry for your loss. Your father had quite an accomplished past!*

Jerry and Tammy Minger

Tammy Minger - October 26, 2015 at 04:02 PM

JB

“ *Smitty was our neighbor and friend. We will miss him and his sweet smiles and waves as we drove past his condo on our way home. We many just have to have a Manhattan to honor his memory!! Our sympathies are with you all as we know you must be sharing lots of fond memories at this time. May the memories and the knowledge that Smitty believed that in death there is new life sustain you in the days ahead.*

Jim and Becky Rusie - October 26, 2015 at 04:02 PM

JO

“ *Dear Sue, Smith Jr., Mary Sue, David, Mary, Kathleen, John, Daniel, Cathy, and all the extended family: I was so sad to hear that your beloved husband, dad, & grandfather has passed away. I knew Smitty for a number of years as the friendly, kind, and dear husband of my kinswoman, (Marcia) Sue Shaver. I know he was a blessing in her life and the lives of others. May the memory of many happy times you have had with Smitty remain strong and bring you comfort in sad times. I hold you all in my heart. Joanne Shaver joanneleeshaver@gmail.com*

Joanne Shaver - October 26, 2015 at 04:02 PM