



Wayne Warden Jr.

June 9, 1926 - June 1, 2015

Wayne Warden Jr., of Bloomington passed away at the Bloomington Hospital on June 1, 2015. Born June 9, 1916 in Nashville, TN, he was the son of Wayne Warden and Prudence Marshall Warden. His father was a sales manager with American Sanitation and Wayne lived in Evansville, IN and St. Louis, MO before settling into Indianapolis in 1926.

Always curious about electronics and technology, Wayne built his first radio at age eleven. He became an Eagle Scout at age twelve, worked as a soda jerk after school and played the violin.

Warden graduated from Tech High School at age 17, in 1933, and joined the Army Air Corp., now known as the United States Air Force. His passion was to fly airplanes, but due to color blindness, he was ineligible. However, Wayne's interest in radio made for a perfect fit as a co-pilot radio operator.

He served several years in China, took a leave of absence to attend Butler University, and re-enlisted in 1941 during WWII. Wayne was a skilled radio operator serving in New Guinea and the Philippines as a Major in the US Army Signal Corps'. The signal Corps pioneered in the development of radar to detect approaching

aircraft as well as a mobile communications and deciphering machines. Wayne could signal Morse code at over 60 words a minute.

His active duty service culminated over a 15 year period and including time in the Reserves Warden retired as a Lt. Col., serving a total of 39 years. After the war Wayne returned to IU where he met his future bride Marilyn Seward. They married June 8, 1947 and Warden graduated a year later with a BS degree from the School of Business. He continued to serve on Active Duty in Columbus, IN, during the Korean War, while working part time as a bookkeeper at Seward & Company, his wife's families industrial and plumbing supply business. In 1954 the family moved to Shelbyville, IN where Wayne became a salesman for General Electric Co., as a heating and coiling element specialist. The family returned to Bloomington in 1963 in order for Wayne to begin taking over the management of the family business. He retired from Seward & Company as Chairman of the Board in 1980. During those years, Warden took up the hobby he was never qualified to do in the military, fly private aircraft. He and flying buddies Bill Benckhart, Dr. Tad Rieger and Dr. Jo Millan had many years of enjoyment flying planes together.

Warden traveled extensively and even owned property in St. Croix, US Virgin Islands for many years. He visited every continent in the world, all 50 states in the US. His love of ham radio took him to some of the most exotic parts of the world, including Easter Island, Cocos Islands, and Wallace Island. His expertise in ham radio was also used helping foreign students at IU communicate with their families by radio contact long before cell phones existed.

He is past member of the First Baptist Church and served as a deacon there. Wayne was an active member of Bloomington Country Club, BPO Elks Lodge 446, IU Varsity Club, IU Foundation, Phi Delta Theta fraternity, and the Ham Radio Club of Bloomington. Wayne was actively involved with Boy Scouts of America and was an assistant troop leader with Troop 3 in Bloomington where his son's Jim and Jeff were members.

He is survived by four children John A. (Ann), James M. (Marcie), Jeffery W. (Pamela) and Nancy J. Wroblewski (Mark). He is preceded in death by his wife, Marilyn, of 56 years.

A private family service, with military honors, will be held on Sunday June 12, at Dunn Cemetery, where he will be laid to rest with his beloved Marilyn. There will be a Celebration of Life at the residence of Jeff and Pam that afternoon from 3:00-5:00pm. Friends and family are welcome to attend. Memorial contributions may be made in Wayne's honor to the Boy Scouts of America or Indiana University Kelly School of Business. g