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Obit - William Buckellew

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William Buckellew

CHARLESTON — William F. Buckellew, age 85 of Charleston, passed away on Thursday, November 14, 2013 at Brookstone Estates of Charleston. Visitation will be held Monday, November 18, 2013 from 5:00 — 6:00 p.m. at Wesley United Methodist Church, 2206 Fourth Street in Charleston. A Memorial Service honoring and celebrating his life will begin at 6:00 p.m. on Monday with Reverend Walter Carlson officiating. Inurnment will be at a later date in Roselawn Cemetery in Charleston. It is requested that thoughtful donations in his honor be made to Shriners Hospitals for Children or to Wesley United Methodist Church. Gifts may be left on the memorial table at the visitation or service or may be mailed to Adams Funeral Chapel, 2330 Shawnee Dr., Charleston, IL 61920.

Bill was born on June 10, 1928 in Georgetown, Illinois, a son of the late Franklin and Verla (Haworth) Buckellew. Bill met Lois Ann Soliah while both were students at North Dakota State University in Fargo and their friendship blossomed. They were married on April 9, 1952 at St. John Lutheran Church in Hatton, ND and have celebrated 61 years of friendship and marriage. In addition to Lois, he is survived by his three sons, Michael Buckellew and wife Marie of Honolulu, Hawaii, Mark Buckellew and wife Shari of Normal, Illinois and Jon Buckellew and wife Anne of Moorhead, Minnesota; six grandchildren, Christopher, Brock, Quin and Bryant Buckellew and Scott and Jessica Spaniol; and a brother, Dean Buckellew and wife Marie of Boston.

Bill was a graduate of Georgetown High School where he was a member of the football, basketball and track teams and served as yearbook editor. In June of 1946 he began his military service with the U.S. Army-Air Force and U.S. Air Force as a meteorologist with the Eighth Weather Squadron assigned to Greenland, Labrador and Newfoundland.

After honorably serving his country Bill earned his Bachelor's Degree from NDSU in Fargo and was a member of the Bison Football Team, Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity and the Air Force Drill Team and received the President's Award as a Distinguished Military Graduate of Advanced Air Force ROTC. As a First Lieutenant, Bill served in the Air Force Reserves while earning his Masters Degree at the University of Illinois and was an assistant coach of the University of Illinois Football team — a team he continued to support through his attendance at the Illini games. He later attained his Doctorate from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

Bill was a teacher and coach in Kankakee, Illinois and in 1956 became the first Athletic Director and Football Coach of the newly formed Lake Park High School in the Chicago suburban area of Medina. In 1962, Bill, Lois, and their three young sons moved to Charleston and Dr. Buckellew was a Professor and Administrator at Eastern Illinois University until his retirement in 1988. He served in various positions including: Director of Outdoor Education and Physical Education at the EIU Laboratory School. He was a Teacher of Statistics, Research and Kinesiology. He was also Chairman of the Physical Education Department, Coordinator of Graduate Studies, Acting Dean of the College of HPER and was instrumental in developing the Master of Science Degree in Gerontology. Following retirement he continued at the university as advisor to Post Baccalaureate students pursuing teacher certification in the College of Education.

Dr. Buckellew belonged to many professional organizations and was an honorary life member of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD). He was also a 50 year member of the Sunrise Masonic Lodge #130 in Fargo, a life member of the Charleston Masonic Lodge #35 A.F. & A.M., member of the Ansar Shrine and the Valley of Danville Scottish Rite, and a past member of the Charleston Rotary. His professional biography is listed in Who's Who in America, Who's Who in American Education, Leaders in American Education and Who's Who in the Midwest. Bill has also been a faithful and active member of Wesley United Methodist Church in Charleston for many years.

Bill has traveled the United States and internationally to Canada, Greenland, Labrador, Newfoundland, Taiwan, Korea and Japan — many of the travels were enjoyed with Lois at his side. His love for the outdoors was established at an early age as outdoor activities were a significant part of Bill's early life with his father, uncles and cousins. He later shared his enjoyment and knowledge of the natural world not only with Lois but with Michael, Mark and Jon, his grandchildren and his many friends. He recently completed an "Outdoor Journal" in which he remembers these special people and their life adventures together.