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## Obit - Robert Weidner

Journal-Gazette Times-Courier

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# Robert Weidner

CHARLESTON — Robert W. Weidner, 90, of Charleston passed away peacefully the

evening of Sunday, November 17, 2013 with his loving wife Jean at his side.

Visitation will be 1-2 p.m. Saturday, Novem-

ber 23, 2013 at the Harper-Swickard Funeral Home, with a memorial service to follow at 2 p.m. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the Charleston Food Pantry or Amnesty International.

Bob was born on October 21, 1923, in Brookfield, WI, the only child of Oswald and Minnie (Giencke) Weidner. He spent his childhood in Milwaukee. He enlisted in the Army on November 19, 1942, and served in World War II in a MASH unit in Europe. Upon being honorably discharged at the war's end, Bob earned a Bachelor's degree from Milwaukee State Teacher's College (now called University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee) in 1949. Bob was both a gifted teacher and an accomplished musician who played in musical ensembles, orchestras and bands, including the Miller High Life Band in Milwaukee, throughout his career. After teaching at the high school level for several years, Bob obtained his Ph.D. in 1960 from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY and taught at the college level thereafter.

In 1962, while teaching at Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln, Bob met Jean

Dionne Rockwell. They were married on August 14 of that year in her hometown, Broken Bow, Nebraska. After a couple of years in at Dubuque, Iowa, where he was head of the music department at the University of Dubuque, Bob and Jean relocated to Charleston, where Bob served as a music professor at EIU from 1965 until he retired in 1993. Subjects taught included music theory and music history. He also mentored students on double-reed instruments such as the bassoon. Bob was a devoted husband and father, who stayed in shape by running and playing tennis. As regular readers of this paper know, he was an unabashed progressive. His political ideals were shaped in part by the experience of growing up in poverty during the Great Depression and experiencing firsthand the effectiveness of good government, in the form of FDR's New Deal. Though he was no stranger to hard work, he gave credit where credit was due for his success, acknowledging the Federal GI Bill for making it possible for him to attend college to better his circumstances.

Bob will be remembered for his passion for teaching, scholarship, and social justice, as well as his intelligence, love of animals, and sharp wit. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Jean; two children, Diane Weidner (Mark Nagy) of Chicago, and Robert R. Weidner (Jennifer Schultz) of Duluth, MN; and two grandsons, Otis and Lewis Weidner.

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Weidner