

Obituary

Everett Willemsen, Jr.

Everett Willemsen, Jr., 90, of Grinnell and formerly of Lynnville died April 15, 2009, at St. Francis Manor in Grinnell.

Funeral services have been scheduled for 10:30 a.m.

Thursday, April 23, at the Grinnell United Methodist Church with

the Rev. Len E. Willemsen

Eberhart, pastor and Rev. Marvin Miller of New Sharon, officiating. Organist will be Darwin Van Wyk and vocalist Cindy Willemsen. Pallbearers will be Ron, Bob, Larry, Brenda, and Dan Willemsen and Michelle and Leigh Ann Zoto. Burial will be in Woodland Cemetery in Lynnville.

Visitation will be held from 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m. Wednesday at the Smith Funeral Home in Grinnell and where the family will be present from 6:00 to 8:00 Wednesday evening.

Memorial contributions may be directed to the Grinnell United Methodist Church or St. Francis Manor.



Everett was born on June 9, 1918, in Lynnville the son of Everet and Alice Dykens Willemsen, Sr. He was raised in Lynnville and attended Black Oak rural school near his home. For several years he was employed at the Maytag Company in Newton.

Everett entered the U.S. Army in August of 1941. He graduated from pilot training and B-26 transition and operational training from the Army Air Corps and was assigned to the 397th Bomb Group, 599th Bombardment Squadron. He flew 64 combat missions in the European Theater including D-Day, which was his 15th mission. He was awarded the Purple Heart, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with 11 Oak Leaf Clusters, ETO Medal with 5 Battle Stars, Presidential Unit Citation, WW II Victory Medal, American Defense Medal and American Campaign Medal. After release from active duty in 1947, he remained in the Air Force Reserves for 21 years and retired as a lieutenant colonel.

On August 12, 1945, he was married to Dorothy B. Smith, in Newton, Iowa. The couple lived in Lynnville where he operated the Lynnville Drugstore and for

many years he was also a rural letter carrier for the United States Post Office. He retired in 1982 and the couple moved to Seeland Park in Grinnell in May of 1994.

He was a member of the Grinnell United Methodist Church, Rural Letter Carriers Association, Grinnell American Legion, The Retired Officers Association, B-26 Marauder Historical Society, and the 9th Air Force 397th Bomb Group 599th Bombardment Squadron Historical Society.

Everett enjoyed traveling in his Air Stream travel trailer and attending Air Stream rally's around the country. He loved fishing and held a keen interest in current affairs.

Survivors include two children, Sandra (George) Zoto of West Barnstable, Massachusetts and Brian (Teri) Willemsen of Streamwood, Illinois; two sisters, Cornelia Johnson of Grinnell and Ella Mae Van Helden of Mitchellville; four grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife in 2007; two brothers, John and Fred Willemsen; and one sister, Margaret DeHartog.