

Dean McWilliams, 88

Dean Robert McWilliams, 88, of Montezuma passed away Wednesday, June 29, 2011 at Grinnell Regional Medical Center in Grinnell. Funeral services were at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, July 5, 2011 at the Deep River Christian Church in Deep River.



A Masonic service was held at 7:00 p.m. Interment was held at the Goldenrod Cemetery in Deep River. Memorials may be directed to the Iowa Cattlemen's Foundation, the Deep River Christian Church, and the Morrison Schrader American Legion. Friends may send condolences or sign the online guestbook at www.hollandcoblefuneralhome.com. Holland-Coble Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

Dean Robert McWilliams, son of Robert Russell McWilliams and Iva Cheney McWilliams was born on June 25, 1923 on a farm at Deep River, Iowa.

He was educated in Deep River after attending Correll #1 Country School through eighth grade. In 1937 the family moved to a farm southwest of Deep River. Dean was further educated in Deep River High School graduating with the class of 1940. After graduation, he attended Iowa State College for two years. World War II started with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. He was anxious to serve his country and soon attempted to enlist in the Air Corps. He was turned down because he was color blind. While he was trying to enlist in the Air Corps, he dropped out of college and helped his family on the farm. While farming, he was reclassified to receive permanent deferment. He enlisted in the Army and was sent to Italy where he joined the 135th Infantry, 34th Division. He served as a platoon Sergeant through the end of the war. While at Iowa State he served in the ROTC which gave him the education that he needed to be a noncommissioned officer. On returning home, he decided to stay on the farm.

If Dean had another name it would be Volunteer. He started the boy's 4-H club in Deep River Township. He served several years with Farm Bureau serving as the Poweshiek County President and other offices. In 1963, he joined the County Insurance staff and served in that capacity for ten years. He then volunteered to serve as Poweshiek County Cattlemen's President. His service there led to service in the Iowa Cattlemen's Association. He advanced through the state offices and served two years as President. He then volunteered to serve in the National Cattlemen's Association while serving as a Regional Vice President. He successfully chaired two drives to pass and continue the Beef Checkoff. He served many years on the Iowa Cattlemen's Foundation Board holding several offices. He made many trips to Des Moines and Washington, D.C. to lobby for agricultural issues having made trips to Europe, Mexico and Japan. He was instrumental in starting a marketing organization in Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois. He served 18 years on the Interstate Producers Board in Peoria, Ill. and also ten years on the Producers Board in Columbus, Ohio. He was part of a special one year study, nationwide, to find problems and improve the business.

Dean has served the Deep River Christian Church for many years, generally as Chairman of the Board. He was a Mason and a Shriner and a member of the American Legion. He was active in his community by serving on several boards and committees, among them as President of the telephone company at the time they started television. He served the Republican Party as township leader and finally serving the county as chairman. His interest in the Republican Party led to his appointment by Governor Brandstad to serve on the Environmental Protection Committee.

In 1947, he married Marie Wenger from Brooklyn. They had two children, Bob and Mary. Marie passed away in January, 1994. He married his Deep River high school sweetheart Harriet Maxine Gabriel from Colorado Springs in December 1994. They have lived in Montezuma since their marriage.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his sister Doris and brother Dale. He is survived by his wife Harriet, Montezuma, his children Bob (Irena) McWilliams, Montezuma and Mary (Tom) Wynia, Story City, Iowa, five grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Dean was a tireless worker. He dedicated his life to serving his family, his God and his country. His body has been returned to the earth from whence it came and his spirit has been returned to God who gave it.

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