



Ashley Thomas

September 28, 1917 - January 30, 2011

Ashley C. Thomas, 93, of Searcy, Arkansas passed away Sunday Jan. 30, 2011. He was born in Chicago, Ill. on September 28, 1917, one of two children of Harry and Bertha Thomas. In 1938, he graduated from Illinois State Normal University. Ashley married Eleanor Niffenegger on April 5, 1941 in Detroit, Mich.. Ashley was called by the U.S. Army and served in ordnance during World War II for five years with three years in Europe, starting as a private and rising to captain. After the war, he and Eleanor owned a restaurant in South Haven Michigan for ten years. Ashley graduated with a Masters Degree in business in Kalamazoo, Michigan in 1958, and then taught business courses at Rich East High School in Park Forest, Illinois. He encouraged and supported the higher education of many young people. After retiring, Ashley and Eleanor enjoyed spending time together in the country outside Rogers, Arkansas. They raised pet Welsh Corgis and Ashley learned to water witch to locate wells for his new neighbors. He also founded and served as president of the Piney Point Volunteer Fire Department. He was a member of two organ clubs. They had many friends and enjoyed music and a big garden, and Ashley loved to fish in Beaver Lake. Ashley relished passing on his knowledge and enjoyment to young relatives and children of friends. In 2004, Ashley and Eleanor moved to Searcy, to be with good friends there. He did much to serve the communities where he lived and will be dearly missed.

Ashley is survived by his wife Eleanor; his sister Ada C. Jaquet of Santa Cruz, California; nieces, Joanne Tanner of Santa Cruz, California and her son

Duncan, Jane Malin of Houston, Texas and her daughter Jennifer and Julia Tanner of Nashville Tennessee and her daughters Emily and Rachael; and cousins Judy Fassnacht of Avon Lake, Ohio and Stowe Gardner of Dallas, Texas and his daughters Katy and Jill.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the First Presbyterian Church of Searcy, Arkansas, Sheriffs' Youth Ranch of Batesville Arkansas, and Harding University, for the Ashley Thomas Endowed Music Scholarship and the Eleanor Thomas Endowed Nursing Scholarship.

A memorial service will be at 10 a.m. Tuesday February 1, 2011 at the First Presbyterian Church of Searcy. Interment will follow at Center Hill Presbyterian Cemetery. Cremation arrangements by Powell Funeral Home. w
www.powellfuneralhome.net