



William R. Douglas

November 8, 1925 - May 8, 2010

PRINCETON - William R. Douglas of Princeton died Saturday, May 8, 2010 at 2:21 p.m. He was 84.

Surviving are his wife Mildred Jean Douglas, 83; four children: Stephen (Sue) Douglas, Barbara (Lloyd) Simon, Katharine (Ron) Oloffson, and Paul (Rose) Douglas; 10 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. His parents preceded him in death.

Born in Springfield, Illinois to J.H. and Helen Douglas on November 8, 1925, he graduated from Ashland High School in 1942. Three years later, he enlisted in the U.S. Army, serving from January 9, 1945 to November 21, 1946.

He served overseas in World War II with the 82nd Chemical Mortar Division, Company C, 4th Battalion in the Philippines and Army of Occupation in Tokyo, Japan. He received five medals during his service: the Asiatic Pacific Theater Medal, Philippine Liberty Medal, Victory Medal, Good Conduct Medal, and the Occupation of Japan Medal.

On January 29, 1949, he married his beloved Mildred Jean Upchurch at her parents' home in Beardstown, Illinois. He attended Illinois State Normal University, graduating in 1950 with a bachelor's degree in music, returning to

receive his master's degree a few years later.

Bill's heart was passionate for teaching and music. He served as the band director in six different schools in Illinois, earning state recognition on an annual basis. He taught band at Virden, Varna, and Gilman, Illinois for nine years. He later taught in Crystal Lake, Tiskilwa and then Princeton, Illinois. He also served as principal at Logan Junior High School.

Bill was adamant about discipline and hard work, instilling both into each student and band he so carefully crafted. One of Bill's former students and now Bureau County Republican editor Terri Simon recently described Bill as "a man who cared enough about his students to challenge them to be as good as they possibly could be - a fine teacher in the truest sense of the word."

He retired in 1984 after more than 35 years of teaching. He was a member of First Lutheran Church. Other interests and passions included fishing, golfing and flying: he received his pilot's license in 1970.

The Douglas family has lived in Princeton since 1962, and the home has been filled with enthusiasm and laughter for several generations. Much of Bill's family inherited his teaching spirit, becoming dedicated educators themselves, and many of his children and grandchildren exercise talents in music as well. Bill patiently cared for his wife at their home, where they enjoyed sitting on their porch swing and eating dinner by candlelight almost every night.

A family memorial service was held May 9 at his home in Princeton.