



Ralph B. Harden

November 19, 1920 - May 20, 2011

Ralph B. Harden, 90, of Fort Collins, died May 20, 2011 at his home. Mr. Harden was born November 19, 1920 in Omaha, Nebraska to Edmond and Elizabeth Cummings Harden. Ralph was a flight instructor for the Army Air Corps in Chickasha, Oklahoma. He married Mary Jo Tapp on May 21, 1943. He was a pilot for United Airlines and a test pilot for the Army Reserves. After receiving his Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctor degrees, cum laude, from the University of Denver in 1947 and 1948, respectively, Ralph moved from Denver to Fort Collins. In 1948 he started his private practice in the area of civil litigation and aviation law. In addition to having his private law firm, Ralph was the Larimer County Attorney for more than 35 years, attorney for Poudre School District, and Rocky Mountain Bank. As president of the First National Tower Corporation, he was instrumental in the construction of the tallest building in Fort Collins, The First National Tower. He was listed in Martindale-Hubble as an "A" rated lawyer. He practiced before all Colorado courts, both federal and state, the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals, the U.S. Tax Court, and the United States Supreme Court. By special admission he also practiced before state courts in Wyoming and Texas. Many of his cases set precedents in the law. Ralph belonged to the American Board of Trial Advocates, American College of Trial Lawyers, Fort Collins City Charter Convention, charter member of Ethics Committee for the United States District Court of Colorado, and he served on the Federal Uniform Laws Commission in Washington, D.C. He worked on committees during the establishment of the

Fort Collins Country Club. Ralph enjoyed service clubs such as Rotary and Toastmasters. He was initiated into the Elks Lodge #804 on September 22, 1949 where he was the 59th Exalted Ruler from 1960 to 1961. His 63-year Life Membership gave him the honor of having the longest membership in that lodge. Ralph married Bonnie J. Hahn Wise on June 13, 1977 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Survivors include his wife, Bonnie; daughter, Beth McGregor; son, Ed Harden both of Fort Collins; stepson, Mike Wise of Emporia, Kansas; stepdaughter, Theresa Reynolds of Lexington, South Carolina, Angela Ferguson of Greeley; fifteen grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. Preceding Ralph in death are his parents, two brothers and a sister, former wife Mary Jo Tapp Harden, and his stepson, Tony Wise. A Memorial Service will be held at Timberline Church, South Auditorium, 2908 S. Timberline Rd. on Friday, May 27, 2011 at 10:30 a.m. Pastor John Engle will officiate the service. Elks service will be conducted by the #804 members. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions can be made to Pathways Hospice in care of Bohlender Funeral Chapel, 121 W. Olive St., Ft. Collins, CO 80524.

Tribute Wall

DK

“ In my 8 years as a Larimer County Commissioner, it was an honor and pleasure to be guided by the professional services of Ralph Harden. In Ralph's 1st meeting with me, He made the statement, "In your job, you do not want to be defended by a 'hack.'" Ralph Harden was the Lawyer's Lawyer and served the Larimer County Citizens for 35 years with distinction and outstanding legal talent. Ralph possessed a wry sense of humor, that when fully expressed could bring tears of laughter. Then there was golf! No one loved the game more, and should his golfing talents have matched his legal abilities, Ralph would have bested the finest pros. But love golf, no one exceeded his affection. One of Ralph's great accomplishments was landing Bonnie. The social setting the two of them established was beautiful. Ralph Harden, a truly exceptional Human Being.

Daryle Klassen - June 05, 2011 at 12:00 AM

CD

“ Even though we knew Ralph less than ten years, we have many good memories of him. We have so much respect for all that he accomplished in his life. Ralph embraced our family and became a part of it when Mike married Shelley. We will miss him.

Clyde & Carolynn Davidson - May 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ May it comfort you to know others are thinking of you at this difficult time.

John O. Walker and Patricia L. Steele - May 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM

RB

“ It has been my good fortune these last twenty five plus years to be a friend of Ed and Angela Harden and their family. In that time, I had brief associations with Ralph and Bonnie. I was always struck with their kindness and humility. This was underscored this past Sunday as I read of Mr. Harden's accomplishments. In this age of celebrity and hubris, much can be learned from this gentleman's singular character. Please accept my condolences to the familieas of Ralph and Bonnie

Rick Bourne - May 25, 2011 at 12:00 AM

KR

“ Beth, I spent many hours with your dad when I worked at the Elks Club between college. He was one of my favorites, always had a smile on his face. There was quite a clan of City Founders in for lunch every day. I learned a lot from him and others. Class guy. To quote Randy Travis, " It's not what you take with you when you leave this world behind, It's what you leave behind you when you go" He did just fine. Kelkie

Kelkie Russell - May 24, 2011 at 12:00 AM

FS

“ I truly loved every minute working with Ralph and everyone in the law firm. He was a great inspiration to us. He was a kind, intelligent, and generous man and a leader in our community. I'll always savor the memory our fishing trip to Wyoming when we both caught the largest trout we'd ever seen. My family will never forget the flights over the mountains when Bonnie and Ralph piloted separate planes. Frank, Linda, Mike and Michelle Sullivan

Frank Sullivan - May 24, 2011 at 12:00 AM

DA

“ There are so many of us that have Ralph to thank. He will be greatly missed. My prayers and thoughts are with Bonnie and the rest of his family.

David Ayraud - May 23, 2011 at 12:00 AM

KH

“ Bettie and I would like to extend our sympathy to Bonnie and the entire Harden Family. Ralph was a true friend of the our family and a great man

Kent & Bettie Hotchkiss - May 23, 2011 at 12:00 AM

GB

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with Bonnie and all of the family. Ralph was a wonderful person and will be missed by all.

Gary and Mary Birdsell - May 23, 2011 at 12:00 AM

NG

“ Bonnie, I remember how thrilled my mother was when you and Ralph got married. She was so fond of both of you. She loved knowing and hearing about your children. I am so glad you and Ralph had so many happy years. My deepest sympathy to you and the family. Fondly, Nancy Guffey Maxine's daughter

nancy Guffey - May 23, 2011 at 12:00 AM