

Bayer, Marvin 1920 - 2009

The Evening Leader – July 10, 2009

Marvin Bayer died peacefully on July 8, 2009, with his wife of 63 years, Dorothy at his side. He was born in Covington, Ky. on Oct. 17, 1920, to Elmer and Loretta Bayer.

He is survived by his wife Dorothy, his three children, Michael of Georgetown, D.C., Nancy Jacobs of Warrenton, Va., Thomas of Leesburg, Va., as well as his only surviving brother, Bernard Bayer, of Dayton. He is also survived by seven grandchildren and numerous friends and relatives who will miss his gentle and kind presence in their lives.

He was preceded in death by his son, Nicholas.

He was later a proud graduate of Chaminade High School in Dayton, where he excelled at many sports. In June, 1942 he enlisted in the U.S. Army Paratroopers and served with distinction in the legendary "Devils in Baggy Pants": the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the celebrated 82nd All American Airborne Division. He had three combat parachute jumps: Italy, Sicily and Market-Garden (The Bridge Too Far). He fought in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, the Netherlands and participated in the rescue of the encircled U.S. Forces in the Battle of the Bulge. In the 504th's drive to Berlin, he participated in the liberation of a Nazi concentration camp at Wobelein. For his war time service he was awarded the Bronze Star, the Good Conduct Medal, the European and American Campaign Medals, the World War Victory Medal and the Army of Occupation Medal.

He also earned the Combat Infantry Badge, as well as, his most proud possession, his Parachute Jump Wings.

As the 504th had served the most combat time in the European Theater, Marvin was one of the first to return home in the fall of 1945. That New Year's Eve he and Dorothy shared their first of many dates. They were soon to wed and move to St Marys and Marvin's first business venture, the Varsity Lanes. He soon outgrew that first site and in the subsequent years he was to move his businesses twice, to ever larger establishments. At each he pioneered the latest in technology which drew many new participants to the sport. This long time ownership of Varsity Lanes also made him a fixture in the community.

His public service began with the Community Public Library Board where he volunteered countless hours. He later donated to the city of St Marys the land containing the site of the original 1790s Fort St. Marys, which enabled the city to preserve the site as a community park.

Later still he was selected by the Secretary of the Army to be a civilian aide for northern Ohio. His tireless work in this position culminated in 2001 when he was bestowed the Department of the Army's Outstanding Civilian Service Medal. His energy was boundless, and many area residents remember his participation in local "10k runs" while he was well in his 60s.

Despite having seen the worst that mankind was capable of in the war, Marvin retained a deep and abiding faith in the basic goodness of people and treated everyone he met with consummate dignity and kindness. Those values he bestowed to his family as well as his deep Catholic faith; both sustained him and were at the core of his being. His deep affection for his family, his parish and his community has been reciprocated many times over and are a great source of comfort to his family and friends at this time. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations in his name to the Community Public Library or Holy Rosary Catholic School, both in St. Marys.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:30 a.m. Monday, at Holy Rosary Catholic Church in St. Marys, The Rev. Anthony Cletcher, officiating. Burial will follow at Gethsemane Cemetery.

Friends may call from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Monday at the Miller-Long and Folk Funeral Home, 314 West High St., St. Marys. Condolences may be sent to the family via Millerfuneralhomes.net.