

Harlan, Iowa, News Advertiser, Friday April 23, 2004

Joseph Wehr, 75

Nov. 13, 1928 - March 28, 2004

WESTPHALIA — Joseph Peter Wehr, the son of Peter and Elizabeth Clark Wehr, was born Nov. 13, 1928, in Portsmouth. He was baptized and confirmed at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Portsmouth. Joseph attended school at Tennant for nine years and then St. Boniface Catholic School in Westphalia, and was a member of the graduating class of 1946. Immediately after graduation, he enlisted in the United States Air Force and served for four and a half years; he was honorably discharged Jan. 18, 1951, at McChord Air Force Base in Washington.



Sept. 1, 1952, he married a local Westphalia girl, Agnes Schechinger. They were the parents of 10 children. In the 1950's, Joseph started his own business and operated it for 31 years. He was active in the local community and country throughout his life. He served as a First Aid instructor for several years and received two Lifesaving Awards. He was a volunteer for the Westphalia Fire Department for 35 years, serving as secretary for several years. He also served on the town council for three terms, was an officer of the Holy Name for one year, and was one of the organizers of the Westphalia Community Club and served as president. Joseph was a Civil Defense instructor for several years, secretary of the Shelby County Conservation Board and served on the Defiance and Westphalia School Board until it dissolved. He was the original board member of the Senior Citizens Home for several years and was a member of the Fish and Wildlife Club of Shelby County for many years. He served as a board member for the Westphalia Athletic Club for eight years and outfitted the Cubs baseball team with new shirts and caps for one year. He also was a manager of the Westphalia Harvest Tournament for seven years. In 1978, he was on the original board to organize and build the Shelby County Golf Course. He served on this golf course board for 11 years and the club house board for nine years. He also served on the Shelby County Crime Stoppers Board. In 1991, he sold his business and semi-retired. He was a lifelong member of St. Boniface Catholic Church in Westphalia. Joseph died March 28, 2004, at Fairview Heights, IL, at age 75 years, four months and 15 days.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his brother, Don Wehr; and a sister, Therese Stracke. Survivors include his wife, Agnes of Westphalia; his children, Jean O'Mara of Fairview Heights, IL; Cathy (Lee) Knudtson of Blair, NE; Ed Wehr of Westphalia; Jim Wehr of Springfield, MO; Denny Wehr of Carroll; Joseph Wehr, Jr. (Geannie) of Naperville, IL; Diane (Clay) Gubbels of Carroll; Dale Wehr of Harlan; Rick Wehr of Springfield, MO; Jeff Wehr (Mi Cha) of Ft. Riley, KS; 16 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; his sisters, Mary Lou Patten of Council Bluffs; Darlene Weiser of Auburn, WA; Maxine Brue of Boise, ID; Doris Orr of Tulsa, OK; his sister-in-law, Connie Wehr of Cedar Rapids; and other relatives.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated April 1, 2004, at St. Boniface Catholic Church in Westphalia, with Rev. Michael G. Peters celebrant. Military rites were conducted in St. Boniface Cemetery in Westphalia, by the American Legion Post No. 707 of Defiance and Westphalia, with Jeremy Kruse, Brian Knudtson, Michael O'Mara, Grant Gubbels, Jonathan Wehr and Joe Wehr III honorary casket bearers. Casket bearers were Ed Wehr, Joseph Wehr, Jr., Jeff Wehr, Dale Wehr, Denny Wehr, Rick Wehr and Jim Wehr. Pauley Jones Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.