



Karl W. West Obituary

October 17, 1925 - December 21, 2011

Karl W. West, 86, of Oak Ridge, passed away peacefully December 21, 2011 at his home. He was born October 17, 1925 in Glenville, WV to Albert N. and Dosha Rymer West and was the youngest of four children. After graduating from Glenville High School, he served in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II. In 1945, as a serviceman stationed at Maxwell Air Force Base, he met his beloved wife Jean Taylor West, who preceded him in death. The Wests moved to Oak Ridge in 1951 where they went on to establish a family that has grown to include two daughters, four grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

Karl was a longtime resident of Oak Ridge and was an active member of First Baptist Church since 1951. During his time with the church, he served in leadership positions including deacon, trustee, and trusted advisor; held key roles on numerous committees; and contributed his engineering expertise to maintain church facilities and property.

Karl was an academic from a young age and pursued education throughout his lifetime where he was a lifelong advocate of science and innovation. He graduated from West Virginia University with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering and taught Electrical Engineering with the WVU Physics Department. He attended the University of Tennessee on a graduate scholarship where he completed all requirements for his M.S. in Electrical Engineering.

Karl became employed with the Instrumentation and Controls Division at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in 1951. After some early years in instrument and design development and product development, he joined the Reactor Controls Department and supported the design, installation, maintenance, and modification of all 13 of ORNL's nuclear reactor control and safety systems. He was the Reactor Support Group Leader for the Reactor Systems Section for 30 years. He also served the section as team leader in the I&C review of several nuclear reactor test projects and facilities. Karl served on the Federal Committees investigating causes and effects and developing lessons learned from both the Three Mile Island and Chernobyl accidents. Karl retired from ORNL in 1990. Karl was a steward of Oak Ridge and devoted much of his time to fostering community development and participating in civic organizations and events. He was elected to the Oak Ridge City Council in 1970 and served 18 years in various capacities, including

Chairman of Council's Committee on Senior Citizens; Board of Anderson County Community Action Commission; Council on Clinch River MRS Task Force Transportation Group; and Charter Board Member of Community Television of Oak Ridge.

In addition to his wife, he is preceded in death by a sister, Mary Leone Tatterson, and two brothers, Homer Paul West and Stanley Rymer West.

Karl is survived by two daughters, Deborah West Barker and husband, Bill, and Cynthia West, all of Oak Ridge; three granddaughters, Amanda Barker Moore and husband Tim, of Knoxville; Allison Ford Getsi and husband, Charles, of Oak Ridge; Sarah Ford Harvey and husband Derek, of Knoxville; a grandson, Steven West Barker and wife, Hannah, of Claxton; seven great-grandchildren, Ryan Hayden Getsi, Andrew Taylor Moore, Madelyne Grace Harvey, Lucille Reba Barker, Rollins Christopher Getsi, Bailey Elizabeth Moore, and Layne Walker Harvey, with an eighth great-grandchild due in February.

The family offers very special thanks for the loving care of the staff at Emeritus of Oak Ridge and Amedisys Hospice Services.

Karl has chosen to donate his body to medical science, followed by a cremation.

Receiving of friends will be at 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, December 27, 2011, at First Baptist Church in Oak Ridge, followed by a memorial service at 7 p.m. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that any memorials be in the form of donations to Agape of the First Baptist Church, 1101 Oak Ridge Turnpike, Oak Ridge, TN 37830.

Comments



“ It has been many years, but I have such good memories of your Dad and Mom. They were always so welcoming to guests in your home. I also remember your Dad driving several girls to "away" games and we all sang songs...especially those from the Sound of Music! I am so sorry for your loss.

Janet Michel - Knoxville, TN - Old friend - January 09, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Debbie and Cindi,

I was so sad to hear that Karl had passed on. He was such a dear friend to us in the church office and was greatly missed when he could no longer come by and leave us with a little bit of his wisdom. I wished I had been there for his service but I was on my way to Cincinnati, Ohio for surgery on the day of his service. You were in my thoughts and prayers, though.

I always loved to hear Karl tell the story of how he met your mom. I was very blessed to have known your sweet little momma and daddy. They both certainly left a lasting impression on my life. Karl was very dear and precious to me. And I will miss him terribly.

Love you,
Lola Murray

Lola Murray - friend - January 03, 2012 at 12:00 AM



“ Life is short. “It must quickly pass by, and away we fly,” perhaps in some 70 or 80 years. (Psalm 90:10) Humans come and go like green grass, like a passing shadow, like an exhalation. (Psalm 103:15; 144:3, 4) But God did not purpose that we spend a few decades growing up and gaining some wisdom and experience, only to spend the next few decades breaking down and descending into illness and death. God created humans with the desire to live forever. “Time indefinite he has put in their heart,” the Bible tells us. (Ecclesiastes 3:11) Is God cruel, giving us such a desire and then making it impossible to fulfill it? No, indeed, for “God is love.” (1 John 4:8) He will use the resurrection to make everlasting life possible for people who have died.

Thanks to the resurrection hope, we can have a secure future. We need not be frantic, driven to reach our full potential right now. We need not make use of this dying world “to the full.” (1 Corinthians 7:29-31; 1 John 2:17) Unlike those with no real hope, we have the wonderful gift of knowing that if we remain faithful to God, we will have all eternity to laud him and enjoy life. By all means, then, let us daily praise God, who makes the resurrection hope a certainty!

May the West family find comfort and solace in God’s promises for the future.

Michael - Jacksonville, FL - December 27, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear West Family:

I had the pleasure of knowing Karl when he was a City Council member and I was a reporter for The Oak Ridger, and later when I was Chairman of the Oak Ridge Board of Education. He was a true gentlemen, a man with impeccable ethical standards, and a devoted public servant.

My condolences,
John Schlatter

John Schlatter - Frederick, MD - December 26, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ I used to work in the Instrumentation and Controls Division at ORNL. Karl was one of the first people I met who was not in my section at I&C. He was always fun to be around, and a perfect gentleman. Not to puit anything in my meaning -- just that he was always kind, considerate, polite, and caring. I will miss him, as I asm sure you will. All my love and cxaring to his family!

Ruth Tuft - Oak Ridge, TN - former co-worker - December 23, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Debbie, Cindi and family, You are in my thoughts and prayers during this sad time. I hope wonderful memories of days gone by with both your parents will give you peace and give you strength. May the comfort of family and freinds be with you. Please call upon me at any time. Much Love

Myra Perry - Oak Ridge, TN - Family Friend - December 23, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ Karl was a first class gentleman & a true friend to me and my family. He always had a good word & a big smile for everyone who was fortunate enough to have known him. We knew when Karl was helping the staff at First Baptist Church with any kind of engineering problems, everything was going to be alright. He was a tireless worker & served the church in many capacities.
I know he will be truly missed by family & friends for many years to come. Karl was an exceptional man, the type of man who comes along rarely in life.
Rest in peace old friend, pain cannot touch you now.

In Christ we can find comfort during these difficult times of loss.

Jack Cowen

Jack Cowen - Oak Ridge, TN - Old friend - December 23, 2011 at 12:00 AM