



Milford O. Holt

December 3, 1926 - February 16, 2020

Milford Owen Holt, a lifelong educator who spent the last 19 years of his career working as an administrator at Southeast Missouri State University, died peacefully in his sleep on Sunday in Cape Girardeau with Jane, his loving wife of more than 70 years, at his side. He was 93.

The Holts moved to Cape Girardeau in 1969 when Milford Holt became Dean of Teacher Education at SEMO. He held that position until 1987 and then spent one more year at SEMO as Associate Provost before retiring in January of 1989.

After retirement while the Holts continued to live in Cape Girardeau, they traveled extensively and visited many countries including England, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Australia and New Zealand. They also traveled extensively in the U.S., including Alaska and Hawaii.

The Holts loved visiting family, especially their grandchildren in Kansas City, Mo., and Washington, D.C.

Jane — a librarian — and Milford Holt met as students at Southwest Missouri State, fell in love and were married on Aug. 15, 1948 in Springfield.

Milford Holt was born on Dec. 3, 1926 in Jasper County (Mo.) on his grandfather's farm. His parents were Floyd Milford Holt and Bertha Evelyn Owen.

Holt grew up in various towns in Southwest Missouri and in 1944 he joined the Navy as part of the V-12 Navy College Training Program and attended Swanee (Tenn.) College and the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, where he played on the junior varsity basketball team.

World War II ended before Holt could receive his Navy officer's commission and he was honorably discharged in July of 1946.

Holt then began his career as an educator and got a job teaching math and physical education and coaching basketball at Stratford High School outside of Springfield in the fall of 1946. Because he was only 19 at the time, no matter how warm the weather, Holt would keep his coat on so he wouldn't be confused with the students.

Holt graduated from Southwest Missouri State in Springfield in 1948. He was a captain of the Bears' track and field team as a senior and also played on the junior varsity basketball team.

After graduation, Holt taught English, history and math at Pipkin Junior High in Springfield for six years.

With help from the G.I. Bill, Holt earned his master's degree at New York University in 1951 and doctorate from the University of Colorado in Boulder in 1955. He completed his doctorate when he was 29.

Holt then was an assistant professor at Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant, an assistant superintendent with the Saginaw (Mich.) public school

system and a professor at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse before returning to his native Missouri to finish his career at SEMO.

Holt joined the Rotary Club in 1961 while living in Saginaw and continued to be a member wherever he lived. He was a loyal member of the Cape Girardeau Rotary Club where he developed many friendships. Recently the Cape Girardeau Rotary Club honored him with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

In addition to his wife, Jane, Holt is survived by daughter Ann Belenky and son-in-law Peter Belenky; daughter Susan Holt and son-in-law Larry Erickson; son David Holt and daughter-in-law Monta Morris; son Bob Holt; and grandchildren Sasha Belenky and wife Alex; Maggie Holt and husband Kenny; Emily Holt; and Katie Holt.

A memorial service for Milford Holt will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday on Feb. 29 at Ford & Sons Funeral home at 1001 N. Auburn Road in Cape Girardeau.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a contribution to Southeast Missouri State University or a charity or organization of your choice. The family is looking into establishing a scholarship fund in Milford Holt's name.

Online condolences may be made at www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

FEB **29**. 10:00 AM (CT)

Ford & Sons Mt. Auburn Chapel
1001 N. Mt. Auburn Rd.
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

Tribute Wall

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“ *Mr. Holt always provided a welcoming home to me when his son Bob and I hung out. Bob and I were good friends in high school, and we spent countless hours shooting hoops outside, eating around the dinner table, and opening large cannisters of Charles Chiips washed down by large amounts of Coca Cola (funny what you remember and hold dear to you through the years). Mr. Holt was always calm in his demeanor, and always had something meaningful to share about the topic of discussion.*

Sincerely,

Brad Baldwin

Bradly Spencer Baldwin - February 19, 2020 at 11:57 AM