
BRUCE WENDELLL WILKINSON

WILKINSON, MR., BRUCE WENDELLL Norton Shores Bruce Wendell Wilkinson, formerly of Crossville, Tennessee slipped from this earth into the arms of his Lord and Savior on Wednesday, March 16, 2016 at his home in Norton Shores. He was born August 9, 1928 in Shelby, Ohio to Clair Whitman and Ruth House Wilkinson. Bruce grew up in Willard, Ohio. Bruce studied Chemical Engineering at The Ohio State University, where he received his B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. While at O.S.U., he met his wife, Berdella Arlene Tonk, and they were married October 17, 1953. Bruce worked for Dow Chemical in Midland, Michigan for 15 years before becoming a professor of Chemical Engineering at Michigan State University in 1966.

During his 25 year tenure as a professor at MSU, Bruce was instrumental in the installation and operation of a research nuclear reactor. He retired from MSU in 1991. Bruce and Berdella relocated to Crossville, Tennessee in their retirement years, and traveled the United States in their motor home, often volunteering as they travelled. Bruce was a committed follower of Jesus, His Savior, and a Sunday School teacher in the Church of the Nazarene for many years. He loved to teach, and was a consummate engineer, as was clearly exhibited in his love of fixing/inventing practical tools to make life easier for himself and those he loved. He enjoyed music, and contributed a strong bass voice in the congregation on any given Sunday. A man who was humble in spirit, he was also exceedingly generous in his gifts to his children and grandchildren, as well as to many Christian organizations and universities. Bruce was preceded in death by his wife of 61 years, Berdella Arlene (Tonk) Wilkinson on February 20, 2015, his parents, Clair and Ruth Wilkinson, a sister, Jane Slessman, brothers-in-law Harold Slessman and Merle A. Tonk, Sr., sister-in-law Ruth Tonk, and niece Barbara Slessman Hendrickson. He is survived by daughter Kathy (Mark) Mitchell of Norton Shores and son Lee Wilkinson of Wheaton, IL. Also surviving are his grandsons, Peter (Emily), David and Matthew Mitchell, niece Nancy (Pete) VanKleek, and nephews Merle Jr. and Andy Tonk. A MEMORIAL SERVICE will be held 2 PM Monday March 21, 2016 at Forest Park Covenant Church, 3815 Henry Street, Norton Shores with Pastor Larry Bush officiating. VISITATION with the family will be one hour prior to the service (1-2PM) In lieu of flowers, MEMORIAL DONATIONS may be made to Olivet Nazarene University School of Engineering, One University Ave. Bourbonnais, IL 60914. The family is being served by The Lee Chapel, 6291 S. Harvey St. 231-798-1100. Online condolences may be directed to Bruce's guestbook at www.sytsemafh.com

**Funeral Home****Sytsema Funeral Homes, The Lee Chapel**

6291 Harvey St. Norton Shores, MI 49444

(231) 798-1100

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