

Sylvester "Buck" Flarity passed away on September 22, 2016. A leader in his family and a leader in his community, the shoes he left behind are as big as the ones he filled during his ninety-six years.

Born March 24, 1920 in Brethren, Buck made his first splash at Onekama High School. Always an athlete, Buck was a state champion pole vaulter who set the school's record in 1936, 1937, 1938, and 1939. During these years he was also the captain of the basketball team and named Manistee County's Most Valuable Player in 1938 and 1939.

Following graduation, Buck joined the Cavalry and served in World War II as part of the last horse mounted Cavalry unit, later serving with the US Coast Guard in the South Pacific. Buck returned to the area after the War and joined Consumers Power where he remained until he retired in 1982. Buck loved Consumers Powers and his co-workers, and continued to be active with both even after retirement.

Greater than his love for community, was Buck's love for his family, and that began on August 7, 1940, when Buck made the best decision of his life and married Rosemary (Walsh) Flarity. Together they had three children: Ellen, Timothy, and Kathleen. Buck was proud of his children and grandchildren. He took every opportunity to tell a friend, as well as a stranger, about each.

Proud of his family, Buck was also proud of Manistee. He continued to pursue civic service within the community, serving as Mayor of Manistee, Democratic County Chairman, and Citizen of the Year. Nearly too many to list, Buck's accomplishments were recognized by President John F. Kennedy, President Lyndon B. Johnson, President "Jimmy" Carter, and President "Bill" Clinton. He was appointed to the Michigan Athletic Board of Control, the State Building Commission, the Landscape Board of Architecture, and the Manistee Road Commission. Manistee City Council officially named June 6, 1981 "Buck Flarity Appreciation Day."

Always a people person, Buck's love for community was a constant, guiding factor throughout his life. He was an athletic coach at Onekama High School, Manistee Catholic Central, and Guardian Angels School, as well as a statewide referee. In his political career he fought to keep jobs in Manistee because it was the place, and the people, he cared about most. Anyone that had a problem was met with an open door, a hot bowl of soup, and a solution. His outgoing and quick-witted personality had him shaking hands and kissing babies until the end.

Greater than his dedication to community, was Buck's dedication for his family, friends, and neighbors. Buck was known, and loved, for his spirited Irish debate, generosity, and concern for family. He will be greatly missed although his presence will be long-felt.

Buck was met in death by many of his dearest who are no doubt celebrating his arrival, and for that his family is grateful. Buck was preceded by his father Sylvester, his mother Hazel Flarity Miller, his bride Rosemary Flarity, five brothers: Chester, "Pat", Chauncey, Charles, and James, as well as three sisters Loretta, Gladys, and Judy. Buck was also preceded in death by an infant daughter Margaret Jane, his granddaughter Lacey Boyle, and numerous other beloved relatives and friends.

Buck leaves behind his daughter, Ellen Marshall (Tom), his son Timothy Flarity (Susan), his daughter Kathleen Boyle (Jim), his sisters Mary, Rosie, and Iris, his grandchildren Heather, Colin, Ryan, Rachel, and Courtney, as well as five great-grandchildren Taylor, Connor, Dylan, Mason, and Rosemary.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made to The Manistee County United Veterans Council or a memorial bench through the City of Manistee.

Buck's life will be celebrated and remembered with a Mass of Christian Funerals being celebrated at Guardian Angels Catholic Church in Manistee on Thursday October 13, 2016 at 11:00 AM. with, Rev. Kenneth Stachnik celebrant. Burial will follow at Mount Carmel Cemetery in Manistee, where graveside military honors will be given by Manistee County United Veterans Council Ritual Squad.

The Herbert Funeral Home of Manistee is in charge of funeral arrangements.