

Wayne Harrison Linke, 95, passed away on February 1, 2015 at Stoneleigh Residence (Hospice of Lansing) in Lansing, Michigan, where he had resided since November 2014.

His wife of 75 years, Helen (Pearce) Linke also passed away at Stoneleigh on January 22, 2015, just ten days before her husband.

Wayne, also known as "Sonny" within the family, was the eldest son of Arthur Carl Linke and Sophia (Pilarski) Linke. He was born in Detroit, Michigan on July 16, 1919, while his parents, both natives of Filer City, were working as inspectors in the burgeoning auto plants of the day. Shortly after his birth, the little family returned to Filer City, and five more children were born there.

He is survived by one daughter, Mary Ann Shinn; son-in-law David Shinn; grandson Erik Shinn (Cindy Maldonado); and great-grandson Alex Shinn, all of Haslett, MI. In Spokane, Washington, he is survived by his daughter-in-law Marilyn Parker Linke; granddaughter Samantha Linke (Jon) Kam; and great-grandson Izak Kam. Wayne is survived by sisters Sylvia Willett and Myrna Schuelke, both of Manistee; and brothers Arnold (Linda) Linke of Battle Creek, MI, and Arvid (Laurie) Linke of St. Charles, MO. Many nieces, nephews and cousins also survive him.

Besides his wife, Wayne was preceded in death by daughter Linda Lou Linke and son Donald Wayne Linke. His youngest brother Leonard Linke also preceded him in death, as did brothers-in-law Walter Schuelke Jr. and John Willett, both as close as brothers to him. His wife's sisters Mabel (Pearce) Jankowski, Fern (Pearce) Davis; and brothers Frank, Ray, Joe, Loren, Bill and Ward Pearce also preceded him in death and were a valued part of his life.

Wayne married the former Helen Pearce on October 21, 1939 at Guardian Angels Church. Wayne and Helen had known one another since childhood when they were schoolmates at Filer City School. Theirs was a beautiful and strong bond that saw them through the separation of war, loss of two beloved children and serious illness for both of them. They truly were partners in life and confronted death together as well. To see their devotion to one another in their last days in hospice was a privilege and a moving experience for all who witnessed it.

Wayne and Helen always felt that Guardian Angels Church was their spiritual home, even after age and illness made it necessary to move to the Lansing area for care. Wayne participated in parish life as an usher and Eucharistic Minister. He was a past member of the Knights of Columbus and for many years worked on CCD fund drives. While residing in East Lansing at The Marquette (independent living facility), he and Helen were served by St. Thomas Aquinas Church outreach ministry, whose members also visited Wayne at The Willows at Okemos Assisted Living.

Wayne was a graduate of Manistee High School, Class of 1938. He was a member of the MHS football team and was a talented hurdler on the MHS track team. Photos of him suspended in mid-air, as he ran the hurdles, are family treasures.

Before World War II Wayne held the rank of corporal in the Michigan State Troops, Company C, 1st Military Police Battalion. He and other men from the Manistee area would gather at the Ramsdell gymnasium where they practiced marching and were schooled in military procedures. That training stood him in good stead when he joined the U.S. Navy in January 1944. He and seven other men from Manistee were sent to Camp Farragut, Idaho, for basic training, and from there Wayne was sent to San Diego, California, where he spent the rest of his tour of duty as a Yeoman (Petty Officer 2nd Class) serving on the flag staff of an admiral.

Military training also served him well when he returned to civilian life in 1946. Within a week he went back to work at Filer Fibre Company where he had begun working in 1938. His strong work ethic and

organizational skills did not go unnoticed, and he was appointed purchasing manager of the Filer Mill when his predecessor passed away unexpectedly.

Purchasing for a large paper mill was, and is a difficult job, and especially so in the pre-computer age when everything was done by letter, phone and face-to-face meetings. Wayne and assistant purchasing manager Henry Belic were served by an able staff of secretaries, and by all accounts, theirs was an efficient operation. Wayne retired from PCA in 1982.

He spent his entire work career at Filer Fibre and all successor companies at the Filer City location.

Wayne was a man who was seldom idle. By 1948 he had built a house in Filer City, just a block from his office. He would come home from work every night and work on the house, sometimes assisted by his father, Art. He even made the cement blocks for that first home using a rented form and mixing and pouring the concrete himself.

When the Filer paper mill expanded into the space where his first home was located, Wayne and Helen and their children moved to Manistee where he again did a great deal of the work on another new home. Wayne loved to work around his house and yard and on his cars, and he whistled while he worked. One of the joys of life at the Linke residence was to hear that melodic whistle.

Though he was a hard worker, Wayne knew how to enjoy himself when work was done. Wayne and Helen were both avid golfers and members of the Manistee Golf and Country Club, where Wayne was club president for a time. Wayne and Helen also were members of a square dance group for many years, and they thoroughly enjoyed the social interaction of the Boots & Bustles. Wayne regularly bowled in a league made up of other employees of the paper mill. He always was quick with a joke and had a remarkable memory for telling them.

Wayne was very involved in his community and often said that "the world belongs to those who show up". He was a member of Kiwanis for many years and belonged to other civic organizations, like the Elks, for shorter periods of time. He was an elected member of the Manistee City Council and onetime mayor of Manistee. His pride in his city was enormous, and he carried it with him when life circumstances made it necessary to be away from home. He was always an ambassador for his beloved hometown.

Wayne often expressed his appreciation for his parents who played such a large part in the formation of his values and who provided a secure and loving basis for his life. Working on his father's coal truck in his teen years (A.C. Linke Coal Company) provided an early illustration of the value and dignity of hard work. Wayne's wife and children always knew that he would provide well for them, even in the years when hourly wages were counted in cents rather than dollars, and his siblings could look to him as the consistently responsible big brother that he was.

Wayne Harrison Linke was a loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather whose strength and conscientious example are a great source of pride to his family.

A joint funeral service will be held for Wayne and Helen Linke on Saturday, March 14, 2015. A Mass from the Order of Christian Funerals will take place at 11:00 am at Guardian Angels Catholic Church in Manistee. The family will be at the church one hour before the service to receive friends. Burial will take place in Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

The family is being served by Herbert Funeral Home of Manistee and Gorsline Runciman Funeral Home of East Lansing and Lansing.