



Albert A Watrel

December 23, 1927 - March 9, 2015

Bismarck resident Dr. Albert Adam Watrel died at home surrounded by family on March 9, 2015. He was 87 years old. A memorial service will be held at 11:00 am Saturday, March 14, at First Presbyterian Church, 214 East Thayer Avenue, Bismarck, with Rev. Marvin Mutzenberger officiating. Cremation has taken place. Visitation will be held one hour prior to the service at the church. The North Dakota educator's journey to Bismarck began in Brooklyn, New York on December 23rd, 1927. The son of John and Julia Rochabowski Watrel, Al graduated from East Rutherford New Jersey High School in 1946. Awarded an athletic scholarship for football from Syracuse University, he developed a passion for science. Al earned his B.S. in Bacteriology and M.S. in Education and later, a PhD in Bio-Chemistry in 1961. Al played football at Syracuse from 1946 to 1950 and was co-captain of the Orange Varsity Football team in 1950. In 1987, Al was honored by the Syracuse Varsity Club by being elected to the Syracuse Athletic Hall of Fame as Letterwinner of Distinction, the highest honor bestowed to a former athlete. Al began his career in academia in 1951 as a professor at Cortland State Teachers College SUNY-Cortland in upstate New York, where he helped develop the Department of Chemistry and became its first chair. In the fall of 1967, Al was awarded a Ford Foundation Fellowship Grant from the American Council of Education to study college administration and served as Assistant to the President of San Jose State University. In 1968, he became President of Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania. In 1977, he became President of

Dickinson State University in North Dakota. After 43 years of public service as an educator and administrator, he retired from DSU to Bismarck in 1994. He was a member of Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity, the American Association of University Professors, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the National Science Teachers Association and American Association of State Colleges and Universities. After retirement, Al was active in the Bismarck Rotary Club and Service Corps of Retired Executives SCORE. He first joined Rotary in Pennsylvania in 1968. He served as president of the Dickinson Rotary Club from 1989-1990 and was District Governor of District 5580 from 2002-2003. Al joined the Bismarck/Mandan SCORE Chapter in 1994 and became North Dakota SCORE District Director. Albert married his life partner of 58 years, Carole lone Fabend, on June 30, 1956 in Nyack, New York. Together they raised a family and entertained many in the communities where they lived, promoting and highlighting academics and athletics at each institution. Al's hobbies included gardening, stamp collecting, photography, rock hounding and being around nature. To no one's surprise, he also had a deep passion for football, with the DSU Blue Hawks, Syracuse University Orange and the Pittsburgh Steelers as favorites. Albert is survived by his wife, Carole, his daughters, Jane Matthew Herzberg of Orlando, FL; Susan Watrel of Mishawaka, IN; twin sons, Robert Becca Watrel of Brookings, SD; William Jaime Watrel of Arlington, VA, four grandchildren and sister Delores Don Snyder of Westwood, NJ. He was preceded in death by his daughter, Nancy; parents John and Julia; and brother, Warren. He will be interned in Cortland, New York later this year next to his daughter Nancy. Memorials may be given to the Albert A. Watrel Scholarship Fund at Dickinson State University, the Bismarck Rotary Club Foundation and St. Alexius Hospice.

Tribute Wall

RE

“ *My thoughts are with all of you at this sad time. I'll never forget our childhood together on Pearl Street. We were close friends and neighbors during elementary school and my parents and Al and Carole had a wonderful friendship. Enjoy your memories of him! All the best.*

-Renee (Gunzenhauser) Epstein

Renee Gunzenhauser Epstein - March 20, 2015 at 05:04 PM

HD

“ *Al and Carole were the parentheses that surrounded and enriched our lives during our years in Dickinson. He was generous, passionate about education and the world at large, and a loving family man. His creative intellect was a joy to be around. Our love to you, Carole, and your children. We feel fortunate to have known him. Helen and Warner Dewey*

helen dewey - March 19, 2015 at 01:28 PM

DS

“ *Sorry to learn of President Watrel's passing. I will always remember traveling with him to China and his opening DSU to international students many of whom I enjoyed in my classes and several I count as my friends. This work eventually allowed me to teach in China as well. My condolences to Carole and the other family members.*

Dave solheim - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JN

“ The notice in the Cortland Standard brought back fond memories of Al and Carole at annual meetings of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. There we learned about Al's early professional life as he began his academic career at the Cortland State College and played a major role in the transformation of the institution from a teachers college to a liberal arts college. He and Carole enlivened our meetings with their warmth and generous comradeship as we shared observations of academe from our respective presidencies -- and presidential "spousehoods." Our best to you and yours, Carole.

Jim & Pat Clark, Cortland, NY - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

LV

“ Al was an avid and loyal supporter of Dickinson State University for well over three decades. During my tenure as President of DSU and, indeed, throughout his retirement, Al routinely attending athletic events and alumni functions in order to stay engaged with the University. His pride in the University was always evident. Al was loyal and gregarious. He often regaled people with stories of his gridiron days at Syracuse, his tenure as DSU President and his involvement with Rotary International. He will be greatly missed by the many people whose lives he touched. Carole, our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. Lee and Deanna Vickers

Lee and Deanna Vickers - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

LD

“ We are thinking of you Carole and Family during this difficult time. We remember warmly the times we shared together in Dickinson which connected us through St. Luke's Home, DSU and Rotary. You inspired our lives so much. Thank you. May the good memories and good times with Al support you now and forever. Peace, From Lyle and Darlyne

Lyle and Darlyne - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

BL

“ It was an honor to have known Al. He always had a smile on his face and a warm and gracious greeting for everyone. His presence will be missed by all who have known him.

Bill Lardy - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

AE

“ On behalf of the Dickinson State University Alumni Association, we say good bye to a man that was admired by so many staff, faculty, students, parents, and community members. Even though he is no longer here in body, his spirit will still surround the ones he loved. Look for the new bright star in the deep blue sky.

Alicia Erickson - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ What a wonderful journey Al's life was. He was deeply dedicated to all of the adventures in his life: learning; sports; teaching; administrating; friends; and his wonderful wife and family. He will be missed and remembered by all who were fortunate enough to have met him. Our prayers are with his family and friends. God bless Al.
Jack and Irene

Jack Minton - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

GH

“ My husband and I are in Florida so will not be at the memorial service. We want to extend our deepest sympathy to your family. Al will be missed but know that Carole and family are in our prayers.
Your PEO sister.

Gerry and Kathy Heinle - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

TH

“ *Condolences to Carole and the Watrel family. Al was loved by all and will be missed. You are all in our thoughts and prayers.*

Troy and Loretta Heidt - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ *Dr Watrwl was a fine, fair man. I think he knew every student on campus and treated you like YOU were the most important thing on his agenda. He always took time to find out how you were doing. May he rest in peace.*

Jill Maria Murdy - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

BC

“ *Love and prayers to Carole and family. Seems like yesterday that Al would pop in my office at Cortland State, later SUNY Cortland. When he bought the house in Homer, he rushed in and said you have to come with me right now to see this house. He loved his family so much and was pleased that he had found a perfect place for them. Sadly, Breta*

Breta C.Sisson - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

LU

“ *Condolences to Watrel family, e.g., Carole, Sue, Jane, Bob, and Bill. Al was a super - "top-flight" guy. Peace. Leif*

Leif H. Urseth - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

BW

“ Time passes relentlessly and quietly and suddenly you hear you've lost a friend. So glad I got to see Al, although it was a while ago. So glad we got to enjoy his friendship and his inquisitive, creative, pragmatic intellect. We won't forget. Be well, Carole. Talk to you soon. Love

Bob and Julianne Weir - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

RW

“ My visit actually was in Thursday afternoon.

Rodger Wetzel - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

RW

“ I had a nice visit with Al two days before he died. He was still in good spirits. He always wanted to give 100% to anything he committed to. He will be remembered and missed by so many people! Our condolences to Carole and the family.

Rodger Wetzel - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM