



Urban Polking

October 14, 1919 - October 25, 2012

Urban Polking, age 93 of Carroll, died Thursday, October 25, 2012 at the Carroll Health Center Nursing Home in Carroll, where he had been a resident since January of 1995.

Mass of the Christian Burial will be at 1 p.m. on Saturday, October 27, 2012 at St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Carroll. The Celebrant will be Fr. Timothy Schott. Music will be by Marcy Anderson and the St. Lawrence Choir with Jake Gute as song leader. Lector for the funeral mass will be Beth Baker. Gift Bearers will be: Molly Baker and Heidi Larsen. Eucharistic Ministers will be: Ann Christensen, Lorraine Danner, and Mary Jo Wieland. Casket Bearers will be: Chris Polking, Bill Polking, Chris Ludwig, Kyle Baker, Tom Polking, and Dan Miller. Burial will be at Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Carroll with military honors conducted by the Carroll American Legion.

Visitation will be held at St. Lawrence Church one hour prior to mass time.

Funeral arrangements are under the direction of the Sharp Funeral Home in Carroll.

Born on October 14, 1919 at St. Anthony Hospital in Carroll, Iowa, Urban was the son of Anthony J. and Elsie (Brey) Polking. His paternal grandparents, Anton and Mary (Woerdehoff) Polking were pioneer farmers in Carroll County, breaking the original sod on their farm in Wheatland Township. He grew up on the family farm west of Breda, Iowa and attended St. Bernard School in Breda and later graduated from St. Bernard's High School in 1936.

Urban attended Creighton University in Omaha until December of 1941 when

he enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps. He was stationed at various bases including: Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio, McCook AFB, McCook, Nebraska, and Gander AFB, Newfoundland. He retired from the Air Force in 1946 with the rank of major at the conclusion of World War II.

Urban resumed his academic studies at Iowa State University where he graduated in 1948 with a degree in Electrical Engineering. He subsequently attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Chicago, and Mexico City University.

He was employed by the C.A.A. (Civil Aeronautics Administration- the forerunner of the F.A.A.) supervising the installation of radar equipment at many of the major airports in the Western United States and Alaska. He was also employed by the Howard Hughes Aircraft Corp doing contract work for the F.A.A. When the space program began, he joined NASA as a technical engineer. He had a prominent part in the early space missions, including Gemini and Apollo; working in the NASA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. and also at the space center headquarters in Houston, Texas and Cape Canaveral, Florida.

Urban retired from NASA in 1976 and has resided in Des Moines and Carroll since that time.

Urban had a great thirst for knowledge, and was well versed in four languages. At the age of 15 he built and operated his own amateur radio station in the attic of his parent's farm in Breda. He communicated with other amateur stations throughout the United States while still in high school.

He is survived by one brother, Dean Polking of Ft. Dodge; his sister-in-law, Dette Polking of New Orleans, LA; and several nieces, nephews and other extended relatives.

Urban was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers: Col. Warren A. Polking and Lt. Mark R. Polking; and one sister, Maureen Miller.

Tribute Wall

BO

“ *My condolences to the family. I was very blessed to have met Urban.*

Bobbi - November 22, 2012 at 06:22 PM

KS

“ *Dear Dean,
I so enjoyed Urban when I was employed at the Health Center. He was a very intelligent and witty gentleman. I especially enjoyed days when he had a "new book title" to share. May God always keep him as a bird in the hollow of his hands.*

Kristi Schroeder - October 26, 2012 at 03:40 PM