

Leo Vernon Blakley



Leo Vernon Blakley, 92, a longtime Stillwater, Okla., resident, passed from this existence to life eternal on Monday, March 11, 2013, in Stillwater surrounded by his family.

Leo was born to Leroy Errett and Emma Blakley on Dec. 14, 1920, on a farm near Kendrick, Okla. Elementary and secondary education were completed in Kendrick with the graduation of a senior class composed of 12 boys and two girls. He was valedictorian of the class.

He grew up helping his father, who owned the B&B General Store in Kendrick. He played the baritone in high school band, in the Navy band and throughout his entire life.

Education at the university level began with enrollment in agriculture at Oklahoma A&M College -- now Oklahoma State University -- where he received a bachelor's degree with special mention in agricultural economics. His education was interrupted by World War II when he entered the U.S. Naval Reserve for officer training and subsequent service in the Amphibious Force serving in the Mediterranean Theatre. He was a midshipman and was promoted to ensign, USNR, serving in World War II. After World War II, he returned to OSU to begin graduate study and received a master's degree in agricultural economics in 1947. He joined the faculty in the Department of Agricultural Economics at OSU as an instructor, teaching dairy marketing an upper-division course in agricultural prices. He received his Ph.D. degree in economics at the University of Chicago in 1961. Leo taught a variety of upper-division classes, conducted marketing research and was the editor of Oklahoma Current Farm Economics. He retired in 1985 after 38 years of valuable service to many students and the university.

He met his high school sweetheart, Betty Flynn Watson, while attending high school, and they were married on March 21, 1943, in Norfolk, Va. They had 56 wonderful years together, traveling around the world and enjoying family, before her passing in 1997. Leo enjoyed volunteering on various OSU committees, farming, gardening, stain glass work, woodworking and was the church treasurer for 17 years.

He is survived by his second love and wife, Betty Jo; daughter LeAnn Snavelly and husband Bill of Edmond, Okla., and Adeana Sallee and husband Lyle of Stillwater; grandchildren Kristy and Tim Carver, Keri and Craig Harper, Jason and Terra Snavelly, Josh Snavelly of Edmond, and Alyson Friesen of Stillwater; nine great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild. Stepchildren include Jody and Bob Mow of Dallas, Texas, Janice and Mike Burnam of Columbia, and Kevin and Sue Boggs of Overland Park; seven grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Leo Vernon Blakley was a member of the Hanner-Sharp American Legion Post 129 Stillwater.