

# Norman Heiman Lensink

May 29, 1921 - December 11, 2017

## Obituary

Norman H. Lensink, 96, beloved father, grandfather, great-grandfather and husband, passed away Monday, December 11, 2017 at the Circle of Life Hospice, Bentonville, Arkansas. Born May 29, 1921 on a farm near Hull, Sioux County, Iowa, Norman was the only son of John and Fannie (Fantje Hymans). Both parents were of Dutch ancestry, his mother having been born in the Netherlands.

Except for a third-grade year spent in Aberdeen, South Dakota, Norm attended schools in northwest Iowa, graduating in 1939 from Sheldon High School in Sheldon, Iowa. Here he participated in a wide range of activities including dramatic productions, chorus and glee clubs, and athletics, winning letters in football and basketball. Norm enjoyed watching and participating in sports throughout all of his life, golfing and playing tennis well into his eighties. He was a loyal supporter of the "Orabs," returning frequently for Sheldon High School reunions.

At the outbreak of World War II, Norman had completed a year of Junior College in Sheldon. He enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corp in October, 1942, and over the next three years attained the rank of 1st Lieutenant. Until his discharge in November, 1945, he served as a pilot-instructor at the U.S. Army Instrument Instructors' School in Bryan, Texas. Here pilots were trained in the new "full-panel" or "attitude system" of instrument flying by its originator and lead instructor, Colonel Joseph Duckworth. Early in the War hundreds of pilots were lost because of their lack of instrument proficiency, particularly during inclement weather. The result of the new training method taught by Norman and other instructors greatly reduced the rate of weather-related accidents.

On July 8, 1944, Norm married the former Faye Ahn Engelhardt of

Sheldon, in a ceremony in Spokane, Washington. After the war, they returned to Sheldon operating the successful Lensink Floor Covering business for more than twenty years. During this time Norman participated in many civic organizations and boards including the Kiwanis Club (President), Chamber of Commerce Board, Sheldon Community Hospital Board, Sheldon Federal Savings and Loan Board, and Cub Scouts of America. He contributed to the Congregational Church of Sheldon serving on its Board of Trustees, Board of Deacons, and Choir, and as a Sunday School Superintendent, Sunday School Teacher, and Church moderator.

The couple remained active in social and civic organizations after retiring to the lake-home they built at Lost Bridge near Garfield, Arkansas in 1975. Here they were frequently visited by their children, grandchildren, and many friends. Faye died in 1996. On September 4, 1999, Norman married the former Alma M. Roush. After moving to Legacy Village in Bentonville in 2011, they were popular figures at community dances, bridge games, and musical events.

Norman is survived by his wife, Alma, son Stephen (Lynn Alex), daughter Sandra Hoy (Alan), daughter-in-law Michele Lensink (Scott), step son Robert Short (Julie), step daughter Nancy Allison (Randy), and stepdaughter Beth Anne Johnson. He is also survived by four grandchildren, Anthony Hoy (Alison Becker), Alisson Moore (Rick), Zachary Lensink and Alexander Lensink. He leaves five great-grandchildren and numerous step-grandchildren and step-great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, two sisters, wife Faye, and son, Scott Lensink.

Norm was exceedingly proud of his military service, both as a pilot and as an instructor, and accepted veterans' honors in October, 2010, when he participated in an Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. with his son Scott. He loved his family dearly, especially his "super" kids and grandchildren, and took great pleasure in following the sporting careers of his grandsons. He

often noted that his time with his wife Alma were the best twenty years of his life.

A graveside service with military honors will be conducted with burial at East Lawn Cemetery, Sheldon, Iowa, December 16, at 2:00 P.M. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials to Circle of Life Hospice, Bentonville, Arkansas.