



Richard Allen Wolfe

(Ypsilanti, 2008)

December 14, 1926 – August 21, 2013

Richard Wolfe of Midland MI died suddenly in the early morning hours on Wednesday August 21, 2013 of an apparent heart attack.

Richard was born in 1926, and his life and values of honesty and frugality were shaped by his experiences living on a farm in rural Ohio during the Great Depression. His father was a farmer and highway construction engineer and a veteran of WWI. His mother was an intelligent, loving homemaker with an 8th grade education who never learned to drive but lived large nonetheless. Rich enlisted for military service at age 17 in 1944 and went through Army basic training just before the war ended. He attended Case Institute of Technology in Cleveland OH on a GI Bill scholarship, where he met his future bride Ellen who was employed by Western Reserve in Cleveland as a med tech. They were active in a Presbyterian singles group, and enjoyed dancing and even performed as square dancers together when they first met. They wed in September of 1949 and lived together in Cleveland while Rich finished a BSE in chemical engineering. Rich accepted a job with Dow Corning in 1951 and they moved to Freeland MI. In 1954 after the birth of 2 sons, they built the family house on Concord St in Midland where they resided until a few years ago. Rich retired from Dow Corning in 1987 after 36 years as an engineer and quality analyst.

Rich and Ellen enjoyed raising their children, reading voraciously, the out of doors, bird-watching and traveling. When Rich wasn't busy working on the house or on a number of aging, classic American cars, they also enjoyed spending time at their rustic family property on Lake Charlevoix in northern MI. They hosted numerous foreign students and other visitors from all over the world. Throughout the 50s, 60s & 70s they traveled extensively with as many children as were on hand, visiting relatives, friends and national parks all over the USA in a Dodge station wagon. Before and after retirement they enjoyed traveling abroad visiting faraway places including: Hawaii, the Middle East, Mexico, Alaska, Norway, Paris, Italy, Turkey, Greece, Finland & Russia, Croatia & Slovenia, Costa Rica, Japan, China, Australia & Tasmania, and New Zealand. Rich was the treasurer of the Midland Nature Club for many years, a member of the Chippewa Nature Center, and the Audubon Society. More recently he and Ellen were both volunteers for the Midland Center for the Arts, and were recognized there as volunteers of the year.

Richard Wolfe's life spanned 86 years and 8 months. He was preceded in death by his father, Williard Wolfe of Bloomville OH, his mother Mildred (Rhoads) Wolfe of Reading PA, and his older brother Willard Wolfe of Toledo OH. He is survived by his loving wife of 64 years, Ellen (Lane) Wolfe who was born and raised in Red Lake Falls in northern MN and his younger brother Dr. Robert Wolfe of Centennial CO. He is also survived by his five children, Dr. Christopher Wolfe of Olympia WA, Alan Wolfe of San Francisco CA, Anne Wolfe of Midland MI, Dr. Joel Wolfe of Holland MI and Hal Wolfe of Ypsilanti MI. Richard and Ellen also have five grandchildren, two from Chris and wife Dr. Cynthia (Soghikian) Wolfe: Lena (24) and Laura (23), and three from Joel and Susan (Rogers) Wolfe: Michael (23), Mark (21), and John (17).

Richard was a good son, a loyal and supportive husband, a tough loving, responsible father and a dedicated provider. He was intelligent, humble, a good engineer and hardworking in all areas of his life. He was a man of strong character and integrity. His legacy of life long education, a love of nature, respect for others, family adventures and the family's rustic Lake Charlevoix property live on.