

John D. Decker, 92, passed away Thursday, February 26, 2009, at his home in Minot. He was born February 3, 1917, in Dooley, Montana, to Fred and Gladys (Devine) Decker.

The family moved to Minot in 1928, where John attended Minot public schools, graduating from Model High in 1934. He went to Minot State University for one year before heading west where he married Lucille Galvin, also of Minot, in Eugene Oregon, on June 24, 1936.

The couple returned to Minot in August of 1937, where they operated the Westland Oil Service Center and Decker's Recap Plant until November of 1942, when John enlisted in the Army Air Corp and served for three years as a World War II bomber pilot.

After the war, he returned to Minot where he and Lucille raised their three children and John owned and operated a number of businesses, including Culligan Soft Water and TBA Wholesalers. He was also one of the original organizers of Investors Real Estate Trust and First Western Bank.

John was a North Dakota state senator from 1967-69, a delegate to the North Dakota Constitutional Convention and a commissioner on the North Dakota Economic Development Commission for ten years.

He was chairman of the Bishop Ryan High School building committee, a member of the Little Flower Church building committee and the Minot City Planning Commission, chairman of the Minot Park Board, member and director of the Minot Chamber of Commerce and the Minot Kiwanis Club and served on the boards of the Ward County Red Cross, the Great Plains Boy Scout Council and active in the Minot Elks, Eagles and American Legion.

Minot had no bigger booster than John. He loved his hometown and its people and felt they had provided him and his family with a wonderful life, which is why he was such an enthusiastic supporter and fundraiser for so many community and educational organizations in the city and around the state. In May of 2004, he received an honorary doctorate from the University of Mary in Bismarck. As a product of the Great Depression who had never had the opportunity to finish college, he delighted in the honor.

John was an avid hunter, fisherman, and sports fan. He and Lucille traveled extensively worldwide and, for 30 years, spent winters in Mesa, AZ, until Lucille's death in December of 2001. John remarried in October of 2003 to Marion (McShane) Henjum Koll.

In addition to his wife, Marion, John is survived by his children, Jack (and wife, Marjorie) Decker, Mark, and Mary Decker; grandchildren, Jeff (and wife, Josie) Decker, Kristin (and husband, Nate) Donahue, and Christopher Reed; great-grandchildren, Kendyl and Blythe Decker; sister-in-law, Clara Decker; brother-in-law, Harold Iverson; step-children, Janet (and husband, Herman) Muhlbradt, and Dan, Katherine and John (and wife, Kathleen) Henjum.

John was preceded in death by his parents; first wife, Lucille; brother, Chester "Chet" and sisters, Phyllis (and husband, Erling) Muus, Marion Iverson, and Margaret Ann and Susan Decker.



John D. Decker
1917 - 2009

