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## Charles 'Maury' Maurice McDowell

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C. Maurice McDowell, 87, beloved husband, father, brother, uncle and friend, died at his home in La Crosse, Saturday, Oct. 9, 2010, two weeks shy of his 88th birthday. He had been healthy all his life until being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in June of this year.

He was born Oct. 24, 1922, in De Soto, the middle child of 13 children who blessed the lives of his parents, Charles Frederick and Elsie (Groves) McDowell. He graduated from Lansing High School, Lansing, Iowa, in June of 1941, and went to work for the railroad a few weeks later, when asked by the station agent in De Soto if he could interview in Savannah that very day. Maurice got the job and worked for the railroad (first the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy which later became the Burlington Northern) until his retirement in June of 1983, 42 years to the day of when he was first hired. He was active in his union, the Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks (BRAC), serving at different times as a legislative lobbyist and as Local Chairman of Lodge 139 until he retired.

He met the love of his life, Shirley Henrich during the time when he worked as a station agent at the passenger depot in La Crosse. They married on Aug. 28, 1945, and their 65 years of marriage were filled with joy, love and laughter. They lived in the same house since 1955, and in 1970, bought a small cabin in Hatfield, Wis., where they spent many happy hours entertaining their many friends and family, boating, playing cards and games, grilling and eating and just relaxing. They were longtime members of Wesley United Methodist Church in La Crosse, and traveled extensively in their later years with annual trips to Texas during the cold Wisconsin winter months.

All his life, Maurice worked without fanfare, doing for others and lending his talent for woodworking, home repairs, telling a long-winded joke and apple pie baking. He could fix just about anything. He was physically active throughout his life: ice-skating and playing shortstop in baseball in his early years, square-dancing with Shirley, playing volleyball at the YMCA, refereeing pee-wee ice hockey and playing golf during his retirement. He was an avid follower and fan of the Green Bay Packers, the Wisconsin Badgers and the Milwaukee Brewers. He also very much enjoyed playing bridge and was very good at it. He was a kind, loving man who led a life well lived.

He is survived by his wife, Shirley who has been a resident of Hillview Health Care Center in La Crosse since 2004; his son, Maurice "Butch" and his wife Shirley of Llano, Texas; his daughters, Maureen of La Crosse, and Kathleen of Alhambra, Calif.; his granddaughter, Lindsay of Austin, Texas; his brothers, Frederick (Maecile) and Blaine (Pat); his sisters, Elsie McDowell, Ruth (Barry) Shaw and Ruth Freiheit; his sisters-in-law, Beverly McDowell and Betty Henrich; his brother-in-law, Bob Dietrich; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; an infant brother; one brother, Hugh; and sisters, Etta, Jennie, Jessie, Alberta, Beulah and Alida.

Pursuant to his wishes, Maurice's body will be cremated and the ashes held to be scattered with those of his beloved wife, Shirley.

Memorial services will take place at 11 a.m. Tuesday at Wesley United Methodist Church, 721 King St., La Crosse, followed by a reception in the church's Fellowship Hall. There will be no visitation. Rev. Ellen Rassmussen will officiate. The family requests that, in lieu of flowers, memorials be made to Wesley United Methodist Church or a charity assisting people with cancer or Alzheimer's disease.

Maurice's family would like to thank the wonderful, compassionate women of Franciscan-Skemp Hospice and special family friend, Dorothy Wetterlin for all of their support during these last months of Maurice's life.

Jandt-Fredrickson Funeral Homes and Crematory-Woodruff Chapel, La Crosse, is assisting the family.