

Fort Wayne IN United States

RAYMEN JOHNSTON, Heaven opened its doors to one of God's faithful servants on the evening Monday, March 20, 2006. He finished his earthly journey and heard, "Well done!" from his Master. And, the heavenly community is no doubt rejoicing that they have a new resident who is an ingenious handyman and a tireless gardener; and the bass section of the heavenly choir has a strong new singer. He was born on Nov. 15, 1914. Maturing during the Great Depression, he honed the skill of frugality to a superlative degree, yet he remained open-handedly generous to family and friends. And, although he graduated (Wheaton College class of 1939) with a degree in botany, he worked for almost 40 years for General Electric in their payroll and accounting department. His real passion, though, was working with his hands. A self taught, inventive but always-practical carpenter, his home was filled with useful examples of his creativeness. All five of his children and most of the 11 grandchildren have many household items in daily use with the imprint of his inventiveness. After his retirement, literally hundreds of needy widows, Christian worker and friends came to know him as an invaluable "Mr. Fix-it", a trait that continued in the workshop of their retirement home until the last months of his life. Likewise, his garden was the epitome of practicality and aesthetic beauty. Each year, the fruits, flowers and vegetables of his labor overflowed the fruit room, freezer and pantry. Many friends and neighbors were the grateful recipients of his abundance. He will be sorely missed and grieved, but not without hope. We all look forward to a joyful reunion in the future. His wife of 65 years, Ruth, dearest friend and inseparable companion shares our sorrow but also the deep joy of Ray's release from the burden of a worn-out body. Sons, David (Joy) of Richmond, Va., Philip (Margaret) of Indianapolis, Paul (Karyn) of Fort Wayne and daughters, Lois (Greg Foote) of Fort Wayne and Susan (Dan Ness) of Greenfield, all feel the pain of loss but rejoice in the certainty of eternal life. 11 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren (including one born just two weeks ago) share the legacy of Ray's life well lived. He was preceded into eternity by his father, mother, older sister, Armen; and younger brother, Dick. A memorial service is 1 p.m. Friday at First Missionary Church, 701 W. Rudisill Blvd. Arrangements by D.O. McComb & Sons Lakeside Park Funeral Home, 1140 Lake Ave. Preferred memorials to the church.