



Jonathan B. Fleming

February 17, 1926 - May 11, 2024

Mineral Point – Jonathan Bacon Fleming passed peacefully the morning of May 11, 2024 at Greenway Manor, Spring Green, Wisconsin. He was 98. Jonathan is survived by four children, Steve Fleming (Cathy) of Jump River and Rhinelander, Wisconsin; Sue Fenlon of Dodgeville, Wisconsin; Randy (Cindy) Fleming and Nancy Lyon, all of Mineral Point, Wisconsin; 10 grandchildren, Annaliese Fleming (Lee Farbman) of Northbrook, Illinois, Jonathan Flynn of Shorewood; and Brendan Fleming (Ian Tiews) of Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Jenna Fleming of Heber, Utah and Kaya Rose Fleming of Durango, Colorado; J.J. Fenlon of Galena, Illinois; Kathryn (Matt) Schaaf and Phillip Fleming, all of Mineral Point; and Milo (Brian) Lyon-Garnett of Lakeville, Minnesota; and Lilia (Dan) Vasquez of Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan; and 10 great grandchildren.

Jonathan was preceded in death by his wife of 66 years, Billy Jean Fleming in 2015 and a son, Tom in 2018. Jonathan (Jon) was born on February 17, 1926 in Garden City, Kansas to Arthur Milo and Edith Ann Fleming. In his youth Jon was fascinated with all things mechanical and developed an early knack for building and repairing. He built a motorized scooter using a gas powered washing machine engine. He created a rock garden stream for his mother, who took great pleasure in it her whole life. Jon also built a wood fired 'barbeque' grill using a discarded coal burning furnace faced artistically with small rock. His father proudly used it to prepare steaks at family reunions for

decades.

Jon was an avid Boy Scout who attained the rank of Eagle Scout by the time he was 15. He developed a lifelong love of camping which he later shared with his family and friends. Later crosscountry family vacations seemed to always feature a station wagon with a mattress in the back (for kids traveling and parents sleeping at night) and a car top carrier for the tent for the kids and camping gear. Camping was a yearly experience with trips to Skyline Drive in the Appalachians, or the Rockies and finally to Alaska. His last trip was into the Quetico Canoe Wilderness in the company of family and friends. By this time he was well into his 70's.

Jon volunteered for the Army Air Corps when he was 17. After basic training in Texas he shipped out to Wheeler Field in Hawaii. His family has always been thankful that the war was over when Jon was deployed, keeping him out of actual combat. Jon returned stateside and built his first house, a kit home that his dad purchased, during the summer before going to Kansas State in Manhattan where he met his future wife, Billy Jean Crump. He had to wait for a date because Jean was so popular, but the following year he finally convinced her to take him seriously. When Jon asked Jean to marry him she replied that she needed to talk with her folks, which meant waiting a few days.

Jon and Jean were married August 22, 1949. Steve was born in 1950. The small family moved to Ulysses, Kansas where Jon was employed by Columbia Carbon Company as a mechanical engineer. He monitored the gauges used to control the burning of natural gas to create the carbon black. In retrospect it seems Jon was always upwardly mobile in manufacturing. His second job was with Bailey Meter Company in Cleveland Ohio. He was in product development. The company was working on gauges for the Nautilus, the first U.S. nuclear submarine. While there he was encouraged to write a

manual for quality control. This went on his resume and ultimately defined his working career. When he left Bailey and relocated to Newton Kansas he became Quality Control Manager at Hesston Corporation. He advanced to managing a new plant in Logan Utah, where Hesston made hay bale wagons. This venture was soon closed and Jon found himself unemployed.

Jon and Jean both return to school to work on Master's degrees at Utah State University and after one year the family moved to the John Deere Works in Horicon, Wisconsin where Jon was once again employed as Quality Control Manager. This position lasted for several years until Jon. In later conversation, Jon lamented his decision to get into Quality Control, saying he would have been happier in a creative research environment. After John Deere, he pursued a career selling as a manufacturer's rep. He was happier as his own boss.

As retirement neared, Jon and Jean wanted to find a country house that needed fixing up. Through some friends from Horicon they located an old stone house on 27 acres between Mineral Point and Darlington. Built in the mid 1800's and with not a stick of usable wood left in the structure...it was perfect. The renovation became a family project. Carpentry, tuckpointing, plumbing and site planning all came under Jon's purvey. When the small house needed to be expanded, the hill above yielded limestone to match the original structure. The home continued to morph into Jon's Magnum Opus. Jon and Jean lived there for almost 40 years.

During this time Jon became an ardent member of the congregation at First Congregational United Church of Christ. He was active in the renovation of the church building, including hvac system, elevator, kitchen updates and made the stained glass fixtures in the sanctuary.

Please join us in celebrating Jon's life on June 8, 2024 at First Congregational United Church of Christ, 80 Market Street, Platteville, WI, 53818 at 10:30 a.m. A light luncheon will follow.

In lieu of flowers please consider making a donation to the First Congregational United Church of Christ. Thank you.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JUN 8. 10:30 AM (CT)

First Congregational United Church of Christ
80 Market St.
Platteville, WI 53818

Tribute Wall

JL

“ June 10, 2024. Just saw the obituary of a Dear Gentleman, Jon, (John Denver, as I referred to him often). What a magnificent life. This man, this masterpiece of a man, will be remembered forever. He shared many stories with me and I never tired of hearing about his love for his family. He missed life with his lovely wife. I'm so blessed to have spent time with you Jon. Thank you!

Julie Lawrence - June 10, 2024 at 02:54 PM

CW

“ Charles and Jeannie Wade purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Jonathan B. Fleming.



Charles and Jeannie Wade - June 07, 2024 at 09:02 AM