



Robert Whitaker

April 17, 1923 - December 17, 2020

Robert Elroy Whitaker April 17, 1923- Dec. 17, 2000 , Age 97 Bob was born in Delta, Ohio to Orlo W. Whitaker and Esther Mae Mueller Whitaker. Dorothy, his wife of 68 years preceded him. He is survived by a brother, Art (Helen); a son, Dale (daughter-Cassandra); two daughters, Donna Wormser of N.C. and Dana Whitaker of Texas; a niece, Kaylin (Michael) Maisonbrink and a nephew, Gary (Teri) Rogers. Bob was predeceased by two sisters, Karen Seagraves and most recently, Mariann Ball who passed in August of this year. He leaves behind a special and dear friend, Lynne Heath, of The Villages. Bob graduated from Delta High School in 1940 and was active in F.F.A. and the 4-H Club. In 1942 he trained as a Tool and Die apprentice at the Ford Motor Co., in Dearborn, Mich. Where he worked with others on the tail wing of the B49, leaving when he was drafted into the U.S. Army in January of 1943. In World War II he served for three years with the U.S. Army, Battery A, 233rd Anti-Aircraft Artillery Searchlight and Radar Battalion. He became a section leader of 15 men in Battery A, serving in the South Pacific Theater in the Fiji Islands, New Guinea, plus two islands in the Philippines, Panay and Luzon. As the Battery was doing final preparations for the invasion of Japan the war ended and Bob returned to his family's farm. While living in Ocala Palms he continued to honor those who gave their lives in military service by a daily raising and lowering of the American flag. He received the Asiatic Pacific Theater Ribbon, Philippine Liberation Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal and the World War II Victory Medal. He was a member of the Ocala American Legion.

On December 18, 1946 Bob married Dorothy Mae Mills of Delta, Ohio. They were married for 68 years when Dorothy, an artist and a noted instructor of Spenserian Handwriting, passed away in 2015. They farmed and kept livestock in Delta, Ohio and later in Reading, Mich. where Bob served on the Reading Schoolboard, the Board of the Methodist Church, 4-H, the Aetna Grange, and the Hospital Board of Trustees. He was a member of the Reading Rotary Club and served as its President for two years. During his long farming career he raised and sold Registered Beltsville meat-type breeding stock for 15 years, selling locally, to colleges which included the University of Puerto Rico, to the U.S. Government Research Farm in Baltimore, Md. and to the Papal farm in the Vatican, Italy. At that time the name of the farm was Pork Chop Hill! Bob also served as a dealer of DeKalb Seed products, corn and soybeans. He was Michigan's largest DeKalb dealer for nine years running. Upon retirement the farm was sold, and the family moved to Ocala where he worked at Donna Wormer's thoroughbred horse farm. Dorothy and he resided in Ocala Palms where they made many dear friends. Bob, a devout man who looked for the good in others and in life always enjoyed meeting and working with people and will be missed by those who were lucky enough to know him. He was well-loved. A grave-side service will be held on Dec. 28th at 10:00 at Good Shepherd Memorial Gardens (Roberts Funeral Homes) at 5050 SW 20th Street, Ocala. For those wishing to honor Bob's service to his country, you may wish to make a contribution in his name to The National WWII Museum, of which he was a charter member: 945 Magazine Street, New Orleans, LA 70130.