



John van der

November 22, 2009

John E. van der Linden, 92, Spirit Lake, died November 23, 2009 at Hilltop Care Center in Spirit Lake. Services will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, November 28 at the Spirit Lake United Methodist Church with a time of remembrance following from 3-5 p.m. at the church. Inurnment will be in Sunset Rest Cemetery at Northwood. John Edward was born August 8, 1917 in Des Moines, the son of John and Kathleen Gaylord van der Linden. He grew up in Ames during the Depression, graduating from Ames High in 1935. He loved music. As a Boy Scout he played the bugle at military funerals and lied about his age to join the Iowa National Guard when a bugler was needed. He played the trombone and baritone horn in high school and college. John graduated from Iowa State College with a degree in economics in 1940. While at the university he was the editor of the Sketch, a literary magazine, and the Green Gander, a humor magazine. He was a member of Sigma Nu social fraternity and was honored with membership in Cardinal Key, Sigma Delta Chi, Phi Kappa Phi and Delta Sigma Rho. He worked at the Ames Tribune and took a summer job at the Scott County Tribune in Walcott. Upon graduation he became a reporter at the Mason City Globe Gazette. Having served in the ROTC in college, John was called into active military duty in December 1941. He served as an Army field artillery officer at six military camps before being stationed in Hawaii, the Philippines, and Hokkaido, Japan. He was discharged with the rank of major in 1946. After WWII, John spent a year with the Iowa Department of the American Legion in Des Moines, and then accepted a job

at the Marshall (Minnesota) Messenger. There he met his future wife, Marjorie Wetherbee, in a church choir. They were married November 27, 1948 and moved to Northwood where he became the editor of the Northwood Anchor, and four sons were born. John served as commander of the Legion Post and was active in the Lions Club. He organized and was the commander of an Army Military Government Reserve unit, and was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel. The family moved to Sibley in 1960 where John was a partner and later sole owner of the Gazette-Tribune. He founded Northwest Iowa Publishers, a cooperative printing plant for several area newspapers. He also helped organize the Northwest Iowa Peach, a regional advertising supplement. John also acquired ownership of the newspapers in Sanborn, Rock Valley and Inwood for a time, and began publication of Dairyman&rsquo