OBITUARIES

Orchard owner Paul Button dies in Georgia

BY TOM BAER
STAFF WRITER

In the decades before Farmington Hills became a bustling Detroit suburb, motorists heading out 12 Mile Road just might have had the Button Orchards as a destination, especially if the apples, peaches or cherries were in season.

Button Orchards was well known to those interested in buying fresh fruit and produce, and so was its owner — Paul H. Button, a community leader of the day.

Paul Button

Mr. Button, who lived most of his life in the Farmington area, died Friday, Aug. 20, while visiting his son, Charles, in Lawrenceville, Ga. He was 78. He had suffered a cardiac arrest following a short hospital stay there.

"He was a loving man and he had a charm about him," said his daughter Marilyn Eldred of Traverse City. "People loved him. He was a very good father and grandfather."

Mr. Button, who suffered a stroke in 1988, had been dividing his time among his daughters in Traverse City, his son in Georgia and his home in Farmington Hills.

The Button land, located on 12 Mile between Farmington and Drake roads, had been in the family for decades, beginning as a dairy farm, Marilyn Eldred said. The bulk of the land was sold off in the 1960s and '70s for residential development, but a few of the buildings are still standing and can be seen from the road.

Mr. Button, a graduate of Walled Lake High School, was a volunteer Farmington-area firefighter for 21 years. He was the chief of Volunteer Station No. 4, which was first located in his barn.

In addition to the survivors already mentioned, there is a daughter, Linda Wegner of Traverse City. Mr. Button's wife, Alberta, died in 1981.

Visitation for Mr. Button will be 3-9 p.m. today, Aug. 23, at the Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, 33603 Grand River, Farmington. The funeral will be Tuesday, Aug. 24, at Thayer-Rock, the Rev. Edward L. Duncan of the First United Methodist Church of Farmington officiating.

Memorials may be sent to the Michigan Heart Association.

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HARRIET T. ALBERS (WILLIAMS)

Mrs. Albers, 88, of Chelsea, formerly of Farmington and Cleveland, died July 26.

Born in Onarga, Ill., Mrs. Albers was a retired executive secretary. She was a member of retired Executive Secretaries Club and member of 1st United Methodist Church in Farmington.

Survivors include her daughter, Harriet A. Perample; two grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Services were Aug. 21 at the First United Methodist Church of Farmington with the Rev. Edward L. Duncan officiating. Interment of cremains was in Lakeview Cemetery, Cleveland, Ohio.

Memorials may be made to the church or Chelsea Retirement Center. Arrangements were made by the Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington.

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MARION O. SHAW

Mrs. Shaw, 96, of Farmington *died Aug. 16 in Botsford Hospital,* Farmington Hills.

Born in Gage Town, Michigan, Mrs. Shaw was a retired secretary for R.L. Polk Publishing Co. She was a graduate of Caro High School and Owosso Business School.

Mrs. Shaw was a member of First United Methodist Church of Farmington, Farmington Garden Club, Farmington Women's Club and a former member of the Eastern Star.

Survivors include her sons, Robert and Herbert; daughter, Margaret Glatfelter; nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Services were Aug. 19 at the First United Methodist Church of Farmington with the Rev. Arthur L. Spafford officiating. Burial was in Parkview Cemetery, Livonia.

Arrangements were made by the Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington.

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VERNA L. BENNETT

Mrs. Bennett, 94, of Novi died Aug. 15 in Greenery Extended Care, Farmington Hills.

Born in Tallahassee, Fla., Mrs. Bennett was a retired self-employed real estate broker.

Survivors include her son, William; daughter, Ethel Weldon; seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

A memorial service was held. Memorials may be made to the Michigan Cancer Foundation.

Arrangements were made by the A.J. Desmond & Sons Funeral Home, Troy.

DOROTHY WIXOM SMITH

Mrs. Smith, 89, of Farmington Hills died Aug. 17.

Born in Farmington Township, Mrs. Smith was a teacher in the Livonia Public School System. She retired in 1964. She was a member of Ladies Auxiliary, Groves-Walker Post, American Legion.

Survivors include her sister, Adaline Jamieson; brothers, Ralph Wixom and Russel Wixom.

A memorial service will be held later. Burial was in North Farmington Cemetery, Farmington Hills. Arrangements were made by Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home, Farmington.

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JAMES W. BROWNE

Mr. Browne, 68, a nine-year *Farmington Hills resident, died* Wednesday, Aug. 18, in William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak.

Mr. Browne graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in forestry and was employed for 32 years at Comerica Bank, retiring in 1987.

Mr. Browne was a member of the American Legion 390, Masonic Lodge, Farmington Lodge 151, and was a Life Deacon at Meadowbrook Congregational Church and a former Scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 277.

Survivors include his wife, Dona; son, Douglas; daughter, Denise Parr; sisters Martha VanAken and Elizabeth Joslin; and four grandchildren.

A memorial service was set for 11 a.m. today at Meadowbrook Congregational Church, Novi. Arrangements were made by Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home.

ON THE AGENDA

Below are highlights from the agendas of meetings this week. All meetings are open to the public.

Farmington Board of Education

Lewis Schulman Center on Shiawassee
489-3300
8 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 24

Agenda items include:

- Presentation of highlights from the Founders Festival.
- Legislative update from State Rep. Jan Dolen.
- Discussion of Michigan Bell easement at O.E. Dunckel School.

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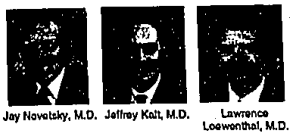
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