



## Richard G. Matthew

July 19, 1925 - November 21, 2008

Richard George Matthew passed away at home Friday, November 21, 2008, with family by his side, after a long struggle with cancer. He was born in Redgranite, WI on July 19, 1925, to George and Florence McDonald Matthew. They moved to Fond du Lac when Richard was five years old. In 1943, he graduated from Fond du Lac Senior High School. He then enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served in the Navy from 1943-1946. He was commissioned as an ensign at Pensacola, Florida where he received primary flight training at the Naval Air Station there. He had advanced flight training in Memphis, TN where he earned his Naval Aviator Wings. After the war, Richard attended Ripon College for two years. He graduated in 1949 with a B.S. degree from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He married Georgia Beth Hyde on October 14, 1948. After graduation, they moved to Chicago where he worked for Kemper Insurance as an underwriter. In 1951, he contracted polio and returned to Fond du Lac to recover. He then purchased and operated the Shell service station at 8th and Main until 1954. At that time, he became the assistant city assessor for the city of Fond du Lac and held that position until 1956. In 1956, he and partner Henry Gilman formed Gilman and Matthew Real Estate, which they operated together for over 30 years. When Henry retired, Rick went into business with his son Scott to develop, manufacture, and market the Talking House radio transmitter. They developed the company into a nation wide business and sold it in 2000 at which time he retired. In 1983, after nearly 35 years of marriage, his wife Georgia passed away. He

married Bettie Lou Pemberton Berg on July 19, 1985, his 60th birthday, They were married for 23 years. Richard was involved in the community in many ways. He was a 32nd degree Mason and a lifetime member of the Fond du Lac Elks Club where he sang with the Elks Men of Music. He was also past president of the Fond du Lac Humane Society and very involved with their establishment. He was past president of the Fond du Lac Board of Realtors and past president of the Fond du Lac Shrine Club. He was a member of the Fond du Lac City Council from 1970-1972 and a member of the Pilgrim United Church of Christ. Richard was fortunate to share his life with many good friends and played cards monthly for over 50 years with several close high school buddies. Richard had many interests and hobbies including golf and bowling, singing with the Barber Shop Quartet, and he always loved to share a good joke. He held a commercial pilots license and for many years owned and flew his own plane. He spent many years running a hobby printing operation and was an avid inventor, always inventing something to fill a need. He wrote and recorded a humorous Christmas song which introduced a new Christmas character called "Ralph the Elf". He was vice president of Concerned Citizens of Fond du Lac and is probably best known for his diligent efforts to have fluoride removed from the Fond du Lac water supply. Survivors include his wife, Bettie Lou; son, Scott and fiancé Barb Gray and her daughter Chelsea Gray of Fond du Lac, daughter, Paula Bennett and husband Michael of Oshkosh, daughter, Vicki Rabe of Fond du Lac and longtime partner, Ralph Harrison of Oshkosh; step-daughter Stacey Comacho and husband Tomas; three grandchildren: Quinton, Carson and Aidon Comacho, one sister, Natalie Mathos of Fond du Lac, three nieces and two nephews: Michelle and husband David Noe of Fond du Lac, Kathleen and John Caluwaert of Glenn Ellyn, IL, Cathleen Ford of Fond du Lac and Thomas and Grant Hyde of California; one brother-in-law, Ron Pemberton and special friend Kathy Barbien; and lifelong friends, Marilyn and Roy Treadwell. He was preceded in death by his parents, brothers and sisters-in-law: Will Thomas and Peggy Hyde, Harry Mathos, Constance and Thomas Ford; and two nephews: Rick Mathos and Jeffrey

Hyde. His family and all those who knew him will sadly miss Richard. He led his life by the example he set and was respected for his strong desire and determination to stick to his beliefs. In lieu of flowers, donations may be directed to the Fond du Lac Humane Society (which he helped found), Agnesian Hospice Hope, or the Salvation Army, in Richard's name. To remember and honor Richard, a memorial service will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 30, 2008, at Mach Funeral Chapel & Crematory, 31 East Division Street, Fond du Lac, with the Rev. Ted Drewsen officiating. His family will greet friends and relatives from 3:00 p.m. until the time of service on Sunday at the chapel.

# Tribute Wall

GC

“ To my friend Vicki and family,  
I just want you to know your Dad was a great Real Estate mentor to me for the past 8 years from time to time as I learned the business. I respected him and always enjoyed the time I spent with him and his wife at their home. He will be missed, but never forgotten !! He will carry the love he had and was given as he transitions to his new life. In love and care.  
Genita Cartwright

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**Genita Cartwright** - November 30, 2008 at 12:00 PM

GW

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**Genita Cartwright of Eau Claire WI** - November 30, 2008 at 12:00 AM

SK

“ Paula, I was very sad to hear of your family's loss. It is easy to see that your father touched many lives in positive ways. May your many wonderful memories help you through this difficult time.

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**Sara Kroll** - November 25, 2008 at 07:52 PM

SO

“ *Paula, I was very sad to hear of your family's loss. It is easy to see that your father touched many lives in positive ways. May your many wonderful memories help you through this difficult time.*

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**Sara Kroll of Oshkosh** - November 25, 2008 at 12:00 AM