

Pawnee City , NE

Judge William F. Colwell, born November 21, 1915 passed away peacefully on November 7, 2020 at Premier Estates in Pawnee City. He was born in Bookwalter, NE and moved with his family to Pawnee City in 1918. Following his graduation from Nebraska Law School in 1938, he returned to Pawnee City and practiced law for a couple of years before deciding to join the FBI. He married Virginia Lee Smyth in October, 1940 and after six years, made the decision to return to Pawnee City, where they lived out their lives. He joined Clyde & Frank Barton as a law partner, and in 1950 was elected County Attorney, where he served four terms, while also serving as City Attorney. In 1962 he was sworn in by Governor Morrison as Judge of the First Judicial District and during his tenure, he twice served as President of the First Judicial Bar Association. In 1975 he was asked to serve as an Associate Justice to the Nebraska Supreme Court and continued his work with the Supreme Courts until fully retiring in 1995. He and Virginia had a strong and caring bond with their family, dedicated to supporting and encouraging their efforts in obtaining college educations in fields of their choice.

Judge Colwell was preceded in death by his loving and supporting wife, Virginia, in 2004. Also preceding him in death were their two sons, James William and Jack Taylor Colwell; his sister, Elizabeth Herries, and his brother, Vice Admiral John B. Colwell.

He is survived by his son, Tom and wife Gwen; Kathy Hill, his son's widow; five grandchildren, Carrie, Bob, Amy, Bill and Virginia; his five great-grandchildren, Taylor, Jack, Riley, Jack, and Josie; and two great-great grandchildren, Otto and Hattie. He is also survived by three nieces, Mary Neill, Betsy Williams and Molli Hull, as well as two nephews, David Herries and James Colwell.

In addition to Judge Colwell's extensive law obligations, he enjoyed playing golf with friends and family, as well as working on and refurbishing antique furniture. Although retired, he occupied an office at Stehlik Law and enjoyed consulting with a close colleague for several years prior to moving to Premier Estates.

A graveside services will be held 11:00 a.m., on Friday, November 13, 2020 at the Pawnee City Cemetery. Officiating Pastor Ken Tubbesing. Visitation on Thursday, November 12, 2020 from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Wherry Mortuary, 919 G Street, Pawnee City, Nebraska.

Memorials in lieu of flowers to family choice. On line condolence may be left at www.wherrymortuary.com. Masks and social distancing required. Services entrusted to Wherry Mortuary 919 G St. Pawnee City, Nebraska 68420 402-852-2387