



RICHARD LEE HARRIS

70 of Mesa, retired Maricopa County Superintendent of Public Schools, passed away in his home January 13, 1997. He was born to the late Lucian Harris and Charlotte Hoover January 17, 1926 in St. Louis, Missouri. Richard married Marilyn Dazey in March 1946 who, after 34 years of marriage, preceded him in death in 1980.

Upon graduation from high school, Richard entered the United States Army Air Corps served for the duration of World War II. After his enlistment was over, he attended the Washington University, St. Louis and received his degree in 1951. In 1952, the family began their journey to Mesa, Arizona where Richard began his own business as a principal manufacturer's representative for several firms.

After 16 years, Richard began to see a trend in the education of his children and decided he wanted to try to make a difference. He then began his educator career as a mathematics instructor at Gerard High School. The next step for his career was the natural blend of being an active member of the Republican Party and a proponent of fiscal and educational accountability within the public school system. He was elected to the Office of Maricopa County Superintendent of Schools serving from 1968-1988.

During his 20 year tenure, Richard served on several advisory boards and committees including a gubernatorial appointment to the Arizona State Board of Education and consulted with the U.S. Education Secretary, William Bennett, on school choice and other issues in Washington, D.C. Richard and his wife of 14 years, Marie Schneider, were married in September 1982. After retirement, they became world travelers.

He was a member of the American Legion, Toastmasters, and held a private pilot license. Mr. Harris is survived by his wife: Marie, his brother, George Sory; his children: Marilee Orcutt and husband Steve, Nanette Beeson, and Todd Harris and wife Pam; Step Children, Cindy Lanzetta and husband Alfonzo, Christopher Schneider and wife Lori, David Schneider, Teresa Schneider, Jill Meyer and husband Cleve; 18 Grandchildren and four Great Grandchildren.

Viewing will be at Bunker's Garden Chapel, 33 North Centennial Way, Thursday, January 16, 1997 from 5:00-8:00 P.M. with services being held Friday, January 17, 1997 at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 322 North Horne, Mesa, Arizona at 11:00 A.M.

Contributions to: Salvation Army, 241 E. 6th Street, Mesa, Arizona 85201