

William G. Bickers
83rd Infantry Division

Dr. William G. Bickers, 88, of Roselawn Drive, died at 9:20 a.m. Sunday, April 4, 2010, at Hospice of South Central Indiana Inpatient Facility.

Dr. Bickers was an optometrist for 60 years, a member of St. Bartholomew Catholic Church and a member and former Grand Knight of Knights of Columbus. He also was a former member and past president of Bartholomew Consolidated School Board.

An Army veteran of World War II, he served as a [medic in the 83rd Infantry Division](#) during the D-Day invasion and was the recipient of the Purple Heart.

A memorial Mass of Christian Burial will be conducted at 11 a.m. Thursday at St. Bartholomew Catholic Church with Father Joseph McNally officiating. Friends and family may call from 4 to 7 p.m. today at Barkes, Weaver & Glick Funeral Home on Washington Street. A Rosary service will be conducted at 7 p.m. today at the funeral home. Private inurnment will be at Garland Brook Mausoleum.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Red Cross, Hospice of South Central Indiana or by giving blood to any blood bank.

Dr. Bickers was born in Evansville April 11, 1921, the son of Thomas J. and Fanchon E. Torbert Bickers. He married Patricia A. Tackett, September 18, 1943. She preceded him in death May 3, 1999.

Survivors include his children, Terry M. Bickers of Columbus, Patrick M. (Diane) Bickers of Kansas City, Missouri, and Bill (Kristina) Bickers of Bloomington, Illinois; grandchildren, Abigayle Bickers, Adam Bickers, John Bickers and Hunter Bickers; and a great-grandchild, Avah Waldschmidt.

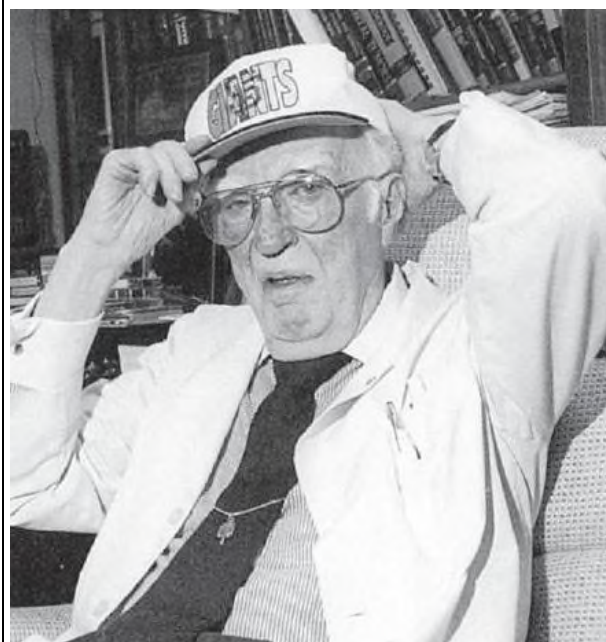
He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife; brothers, Richard and Tom Bickers; and a sister, Elizabeth Lavelly.



"My dear wife Patty and I were married on September 18, 1942 in the old cathedral in Vincennes, Indiana where we were both from. I was one of the first soldiers to come to Camp Atterbury." Dr. William Bickers and wife Patty (Tachett) Bickers (above)

We had the pleasure of seeing Dr. Bickers in Cracker Barrel, in October 2005 - Jim West

Family, baseball Bickers' passions



BILL Bickers died over the weekend. He had been in poor health for quite some time ... almost 11 years.

I don't know that there's any medical evidence that could conclude Bill died of a broken heart, but he sure died with one.

On May 3, it will be 11 years since he said a final goodbye to his wife Pat. It was a loss he has carried with him all these years. He was not morose, nor did he become overcome with melancholy.

In fact it can be said that he lived the past 11 years to their fullest, beaming in pride at the achievements of his sons and grandchildren; delighting in the telling and retelling of stories from an endless repertoire; immersing himself in the lore of baseball; and still practicing optometry even though he was knocking on the threshold of 90 years on this earth. But through it all, Pat was in his mind every waking day. It's been a year or so since I was last in his home, but even then it looked and felt as it did when she was the head of the Bickers household. He had told me he would never change anything in it. I'm not sure he purchased any new clothes since her passing. I remember a lunch we shared a few years ago, and he kept fingering a necktie. He told me, with a wistful tone in his voice, that it was something Pat had picked out for him. Bill was an independent man in many ways. He had his opinions and he wasn't afraid of expressing them, although he did it in ways that would not offend or anger anyone who held different ideas.

He took a pass when it came to armchair carping about the actions of community leaders. Years back he was concerned about education in the community, and he took a seat on Bartholomew Consolidated School Board. Even when he left the board he remained a champion of education.

He loved what he did for a living, but he had an even greater appreciation for those he worked with — his patients.

Though he was well into his 80s and no longer nimble of foot, he saw individuals and families he had been treating for decades. For them, "Doc" was the only eye doctor they would want. Many of his patients were of his generation, but so many others were children, grandchildren, even great-grandchildren of those he began seeing when he first went into business after World War II.

Through it all, Pat was part of his day-to-day life. They had moved to Columbus after his discharge from the Army at Camp Atterbury. He had been wounded in action during World War II, and part of his recuperation was at the old **Wakeman Army Hospital**. Pat was with him through a lot of that recuperation and stayed in Columbus. 'That small town ...' Some time after his discharge he and Pat were talking about a place where they could set down roots. Both came up with the same answer — that small town where Pat stayed while Bill recovered.

The couple quickly became involved in community activities. Not surprisingly, Bill became devoted to a baseball program started by Earl Dickey and a number of other local baseball lovers. That was when the Columbus Junior Baseball program began. Bill's involvement wasn't a surprise, because he had to be one of the most faithful baseball fans I ever knew. He was more than a fan. He was a student of the game. I would love our conversations, which focused entirely on the game as it was before 1970. The names of the players and managers rolled off his tongue as quickly as they did mine. We could finish each other's sentences. But my interest in baseball dimmed after the '60s, and I reached the point that names of current-day players amounted to a foreign language for me. Not Bill. He was such an expert on baseball — past and present — that he was

invited to lecture at a college about the game.

Just like his optometry practice, he stayed active and interested up to the very end.

I don't know what the hereafter will be like, but for Bill, I would imagine that Heaven would be an eternity with Pat and someone with whom he can talk baseball.

Harry McCawley is Associate Editor of The Republic.

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