



## Irwin C. Harris

October 12, 1919 - January 25, 2015

1919-2015

Irwin C. Harris, 95, died Jan. 25 in Beaverton, Oregon. He was born in Corvallis Oct. 12, 1919, the son of the Rev. John E. and Madge T. Harris. He grew up just a few blocks from Oregon State College. After graduating from Corvallis High School, he attended Oregon State, where he was a member of Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity and served as news editor of the Daily Barometer newspaper and editor of the 1941 Beaver yearbook. He graduated from Oregon State in 1941 and earned his graduate degree from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism in 1942. He married Kathryn "Kay" L. Ferris, his college sweetheart, on June 11, 1942.

He served as OSU's athletic news director from 1942 to 1951 and was responsible for organizing the athletic news bureau in Gill Coliseum in 1950. The OSU athletic program was interrupted with World War II, and for a couple of years during the war he worked for the Salem Statesman newspaper. Irwin and Kay Harris served together as volunteers in the Army Air Force Ground Observation Corps, taking weekly shifts to watch the night skies over Oregon. When the war ended, they returned permanently to Corvallis and Oregon State.

In addition to his work as the athletic news director, Harris served as the men's varsity tennis coach from 1943 to 1964. He amassed a dual match record of 154-53, including a winning 30-7 record versus rival U. of Oregon. He led four teams to the NCAA Tournament, with the 1962 squad finishing

12th. His contributions to OSU athletics were honored when he was inducted into the OSU Sports Hall of Fame in 1994.

In the second half of his career at Oregon State, he was a professor of journalism, Director of Student Activities, and Director of Student Publications and Public Events. He advised the Barometer newspaper and Beaver yearbook, and in 1967 was named the Outstanding College Newspaper Advisor in the U.S., awarded by National Council of College Publication Advisors. Harris was a founding member and past president of the Western Association of University Publications Managers. Following his retirement from Oregon State in 1981, Harris wrote and published a book on the history of the Memorial Union at OSU.

He was a lifelong member of the First Congregational Church (United Church of Christ), past-president of the Corvallis Rotary, past-president of the Corvallis chapter of the American Heart Association, and past-president and volunteer with the Friends of the Corvallis Library. He was an avid fisherman and enjoyed golf, tennis, and travel.

His wife of 70 years, Kathryn, died in 2012. He is survived by three daughters: Lois Berg (Patrick), of Beaverton; Celia Foster (Mark) of Bend; and Marilyn Thompson (Don) of Steilacoom, Wash., five grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Two brothers preceded him in death.

A memorial service will be held at 1 pm on Friday, Feb. 13 at the First Congregational Church, UCC, 4515 SW West Hills Road, in Corvallis. The family asks that memorial donations be sent to the OSU Foundation Memorial Fund, 850 S.W. 35th St., Corvallis, OR 97333. Donations may also be made online at [osufoundation.org](http://osufoundation.org). Please note "in memory of Irwin Harris" on the memo line or the online form.

The family would like to extend a special thanks to Hospice Care of the Northwest and to the staffs of Hearthstone of Beaverton and Hearthstone at Murrayhill for their wonderful care and support.

# Tribute Wall

NM

“ My mother, Ruth Stahl Kennell, is 95, and now lives in Albany. She went all through school with Mr. Harris and wanted to convey to the family that "she never knew a finer person".

*Nancy Kennell Miller  
Corvallis, OR*

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**Nancy Miller** - February 11, 2015 at 12:57 PM

SM

“ Irwin Harris was like family to me growing up in Corvallis. He was a wonderful person as well as a talented man. He will always have a special place in my heart.

*Sue de Meules*

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**Susan de Meules** - February 03, 2015 at 02:22 PM