



## Robert Blackledge

February 5, 1916 - November 6, 2009

Former business owner, city councilor and downtown Corvallis advocate Robert "Bob" Caldwell Blackledge died of natural causes Friday. He was 93. "He loved Corvallis," said his wife, Marie Blackledge. "He loved everything about it. He was a true Oregonian."

Blackledge was a member of the Corvallis City Council for 10 years and spent two years on the City Planning Commission. He also served many years on the downtown parking commission and was instrumental in developing off-street parking and the downtown free parking area.

He married Peggy Blackledge in 1938, the same year he graduated from Oregon State College.

He had a commission in the Army Officers' Reserve Corps and was put on active duty in 1941. As a captain in the U.S. Army Signal Corps, he helped establish communication lines in North Africa and Europe during World War II. In 1945, he returned home to Oregon. A year later, he and Peggy purchased Blackledge Furniture in Corvallis, which was founded by Robert Blackledge's grandfather in 1901.

The couple owned and operated the business until 1972, when they sold it to the fourth generation of the family: Eric Blackledge and his wife, Judy.

Peggy Blackledge died in 2002.

Robert Blackledge was a volunteer firefighter for 48 years, a role he held until he retired in 1986.

After he sold the furniture business, Blackledge remained a prominent figure

in the downtown scene. A property owner who bought and restored several downtown buildings, Blackledge lobbied city leaders to promote downtown businesses and keep the area vibrant.

In his later years, he volunteered with SCORE, part of the Small Business Administration.

He was a lifelong member of the Corvallis Chamber of Commerce and also belonged to the Elks Lodge and Loyal Order of Moose.

Marie Stowell met Blackledge at the Corvallis Senior Center. They were married Aug. 22, 2007.

"He was an absolutely marvelous person," Marie Blackledge said.

She recalled that he was down-to-earth and frank.

"He was an honest man, very forward," she said. "If he didn't like something you were doing, he didn't think about it, he told you in no uncertain words."

Her husband was a dancer in his younger years and enjoyed listening to music, particularly organ music. He was an ardent Beavers fan.

He is survived by his wife, Marie Blackledge, of Corvallis, son Eric Blackledge of Corvallis, daughter Nancy Wike of Lake Oswego and granddaughters Jennifer Wike and Angela Hillyer, both of Wilsonville.