



Raymond H. Shegogue, Jr. (Raybo)

*Public Administrator,
Civic Leader, Volunteer*

May 26, 1920 – May 11, 2017

Raymond H. Shegogue, Jr., of Winchester, Va., left us to be with the Lord early Thursday morning a couple weeks shy of his 97th birthday. He is survived by his wife of nearly 70 years Wauneta Fankell Shegogue formerly of Clear Lake, Iowa and his younger siblings John E. Shegogue of Alexandria, Va., and Shirl M. Keehn of Port Charlotte, Fla., two sons and daughters-in-law, Raymond L. Shegogue (Joyce Ann Cissel) of Cambridge, Md. and Michael W. Shegogue (Virginia Kemp) of McLean, VA. Ray is also survived by five grandchildren, Tamra Lynn (Richard) Graham, Jennifer Ann Murphy, Nicole Marie Shegogue White, Kelly Christine (Scott) Schartner and Michael Brett (Tara Nemith) Shegogue, eight great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

A member of the "Greatest Generation," Ray's life reads like a Horatio Alger novel. Born into poverty, as he liked to say "in strawberry time," the middle child of seven to the late Raymond H. Shegogue, Sr. and Ruby Kerr Shegogue on a farm in rural Oxon Hill, Md., Ray grew up on tenant farms during the agricultural recession of the Twenties, coming of age during the Great Depression of the Thirties and serving his country as a Marine in the Pacific Theatre of the Second World War during the Forties. As a youngster, Ray helped on the farm, boxed for the Oxon Hill Boys Club, and served as altar boy at the St. John's Episcopal Church in Broad Creek, Maryland where founding father George Washington occasionally had worshipped across the Potomac River from his home in Mount Vernon, Va. Ray also played varsity basketball and baseball for the Clippers of Oxon Hill High School as a forward and shortstop, respectively. Ray left school after his junior year to help out at home, finding work as a roofer's assistant and a counter man/short order cook at the People's Drug Store formerly located at the corner of Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues, in Southeast DC, where it was his daily privilege to serve breakfasts to two renowned Washington Senators baseball players Bucky Harris and Cecil Travis.

Though short of stature, Ray was a personable, handsome, barrel-chested man with wavy brown hair, twinkling brown eyes full of merriment and an engaging, rascally broad, white smile. In 1940, Ray was proud to obtain a position as a GS-1 messenger with the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) where spittoon-cleaning was one of his duties. Ray volunteered for the Marine Corps in March of 1943 and after completing Boot Camp at Paris Island, S.C. and advance training at Camp LeJeune, N.C., Ray served as a private first

class sharpshooter, manning anti-aircraft guns on various islands in the South Pacific until his honorable discharge in December 1945. Upon his return to the U.S., though a decorated Marine war veteran, Ray had difficulty regaining a position with the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and, though Caucasian, Ray was offered and proudly accepted a position at minimal grade with an all African-American USDA unit during that era of segregation. After a couple weeks Ray was transferred from that unit. Soon thereafter he met his future wife Wauneta, who worked as a personnel officer near him in the USDA's South Building and they married on June 25th, 1947. Through the G.I. Bill, Ray obtained a G.E.D diploma then attended night school at American University for eight years where he earned a B.S. degree in Public Administration, while advancing his career at the USDA and supporting Wauneta, who had retired from civil service to raise their two sons and taking into their home in Hillcrest Heights, Md., his paralyzed mother, a stroke victim.

Ray's big professional break came under the Eisenhower Administration in 1954 when Congress enacted Public Law 480 and Ray transferred into USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) getting in on the ground floor of administering the law's Food for Peace Program. Ray learned the program, rising through the ranks to negotiate trade deals for America's surplus farm produce under Titles I and II of the law with countries in the Middle East during the era of the Six Days war, Southeast Asia during the Viet Nam War and South America and to testify in behalf of the Food For Peace program before the Agricultural Subcommittee of Congress, always working in behalf of and looking out for the best interests of the American farmer. Ever choosing to remain apolitical, Ray declined higher ranking jobs as a political appointee in FAS to retire from federal service on August 1, 1975 at the age of 55, a GS-15 Deputy Assistant Administrator.

Ray always found time to pursue his passion for sports on the ball diamond playing shortstop on the Ellipse first in a local semi-pro league with his older brother Paul and later representing the USDA Aggies in a Government interdepartmental league. Later, Ray pitched for FAS in a USDA departmental fast-pitch league, once hurling a one-hitter that was marred only by a dubious umpiring call on a close play at first base. Ray was also one of the area's top duckpin bowlers, annually winning sufficient prize money for high average and high spares as anchor man on his league-winning teams to cover his bowling expenses in the Monday Night Men's league at the Marlow Heights Fairlanes. As he aged, Ray took up golf and was known for having a deft touch around the greens. He's also been a lifelong fan of the Washington Senators and Nationals and, for thirty-five years, was a Redskins season ticket holder who never missed a home game from his front row perch in the mezzanine and attended Super Bowls VII, XVII and XXII.

In retirement, Ray served briefly as a consultant for the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and dabbled in real estate. In 1983 Ray and Wauneta moved from their

home of thirty years in Hillcrest Heights. to the retirement home they built in Winchester, Va. There Ray continued the legacy of civic leadership he pursued in Hillcrest Heights as Presidents of the PTA Of Benjamin Stoddard, Junior High and Potomac (MD) Senior High, and the Dad's Club, the auxiliary arm of the Silver Hill Boys Club, where for nine years he coached Boy's Club and Hillcrest American Legion baseball. In Winchester, Ray became president of the local chapter of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) organization where he was proud to have supported Joe Beaudoine to become national NARFE president for many years. Ray also volunteered with the local Red Cross to chauffeur those less fortunate to and from medical appointments, enjoyed reading to pre-school children and with Wauneta entertained nursing home residents with their ballroom dancing. Indeed, Ray and Wauneta's great passion was dancing to Big Band music in various venues on the Eastern seaboard. Ray served as president of many dance clubs. Their dancing skill landed them a role as dancing extras on the silver screen in the 1982 Patsy Cline bio-pic, "Sweet Dreams." Noted for their fluid, graceful style, they were asked to dance back and forth before the camera in the film's opening sequence. Ray took great pride in dancing annually with the Apple Blossom Queen at the Winchester Apple Blossom festival and was sorry his recent brief illness forced him to miss a ceremony planned in honor of him and Wauneta at this year's celebration. Ray also managed to pen an autobiography in 2012, shortly before experiencing a stroke the following February. By the blessings of God, Ray recovered amazingly well from the stroke through his inherent, characteristic force of will and self-discipline, regaining his mobility and his ability to speak and swallow, though his dancing in public had ended. A nurse who knew him marveled at the depth of his recovery, noting, "He's a remarkable man."

In his life, Ray circled the globe a dozen times, danced with Wauneta on six continents and cruise ships winning many dance contests and visited every U. S. state capitol. His philosophy could best be summed up by his Cadillac license plate: "IOK UR2." Reflecting on his blessed life after 41-plus years of retirement following a 34 and a half-year career in federal civil service, Ray mused, "I guess I beat the system." Indeed. Ray passed in his sleep of congestive heart failure. We miss him already.

The family will receive friends on Thursday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Omps Funeral Home, Amherst Chapel.

A funeral service will be conducted at 1 p.m. on Friday at Christ Episcopal Church, 114 W. Boscawen Street, Winchester, Virginia with Rev. David Bicking officiating. Entombment will be in Shenandoah Memorial Park Mausoleum, Winchester, Virginia. A reception will follow entombment at Omps Funeral Home, South Chapel.

Memorial contributions in memory of Ray may be made to Blue Ridge Hospice, 333 W. Cork Street, Suite 405, Winchester, Virginia 22601 any organization of donor's choice that support our military veterans.

Please view obituaries and tribute wall at www.ompsfuneralhome.com