

WAYNE M. LEATHERMAN
BORN NOVEMBER 14, 1921
DIED APRIL 26, 2013

Wayne Leatherman was born in Liberty Center, Ohio to Harry J. Leatherman and Hazel F. (McBride) Leatherman. From this simple beginning in rural Henry County, Wayne developed a love of the land and farming.

Wayne graduated from Liberty Center High School, a one-room school house, in 1938. Wayne joined his brother, Cloyce, at Bowling Green State University. His studies at Bowling Green were interrupted by World War II. After serving in the United States Army, Wayne returned to Bowling Green and obtained his degree in 1947. Wayne then attended law school at The Ohio State University obtaining his JD degree in 1950. He was admitted to the Ohio bar in 1950.

On August 6, 1948, Wayne married Melba Jeane Gallagher and together they had two daughters, Sue A. (Rev. James Donnan) Leatherman, M.D. and Kay (Edwin) Leatherman Howard. Wayne and Melba returned to northwestern Ohio and decided to make Perrysburg their home. At the time, there was only one other lawyer in Perrysburg. Wayne opened in his practice and was the founding member of Leatherman and Witzler.

As Wayne's law practice grew, he gained the respect of the legal community and his neighbors for his dignity, honor, trustworthiness, generosity, patience, kindness and intellect. In 1960, he was asked to serve as Perrysburg's first municipal court judge. Wayne accepted and was elected to two terms. His job performance and popularity were of such high caliber that he did not have to campaign for either election. He presided as municipal court judge from 1960 to 1973. Wayne then retired from the bench and returned to his law practice that he and Earl Witzler shared. Wayne practiced law for 59 years, retiring in 2009. During their time as law partners, Wayne and Earl relied only on a handshake, a partnership agreement was never necessary.

Wayne was active in his community outside the practice of law. During the late 1950's and early 1960's, he served on the Perrysburg Board of Education. He organized and help found the Perrysburg Schools Foundation and the Way Public Library Foundation. Wayne also donated his time and talent to the Kip Bolus Foundation and to Grace United Methodist Church. Wayne was also a member of the Wood County Bar Association, Northwest Ohio Bar Association and the Ohio State Bar Association where he was named a Life Fellow by The Ohio State Bar Foundation for his service to the community, the profession and the Foundation.

Wayne is survived by daughters, Kay and Sue, sons-in-law Ed Howard and Reverend James Donnan, grandchildren, Ryan Howard and Katherine and Julia Donnan. Kay has, in fact, carried on her father's legacy and has been engaged in the practice of law since 1992 at the firm founded by her father. Wayne's close friend and long standing law partner Earl Witzler also survives him. Wayne was preceded in death by his parents, loving wife, Melba Jeane (Gallagher) Leatherman and his brothers Ray C. and Cloyce M. Leatherman.