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Posted on Sun, Jul. 12, 2009

Food broker, WWII vet, and 60-year scout leader

By Walter F. Naedele
Inquirer Staff Writer

Marvin L. Arkans, 81, of Willow Grove, a food broker, scouting official, and guard at the Nuremberg war crimes trials, died of congestive heart failure Wednesday at Abington Memorial Hospital.



Marvin L. Arkans was a guard at the Nuremberg trials.

He was a partner in M. Arkans & Son Inc., which his father, Morris, founded in 1935. Run from the family home, the business represents manufacturers to wholesalers, Mr. Arkans' son Steven said.

SAVE AND SHARE

Mr. Arkans was also a president and director of the Philadelphia Food Brokers Association, his son said.

Born in the Olney section of Philadelphia, he graduated from Central High School and earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Temple University.

He served in the Army from 1944 to 1947, his son said, and was assigned from March to December 1946 to the trials of former Nazi officials, which lasted from 1945 to 1949.

In a note to his family, Mr. Arkans said that as a sergeant he was a warden in the office of the German defense counsel.

A Boy Scout as a child, Mr. Arkans had been a scouting official since 1949.

Beginning as a scoutmaster at the Oxford Circle Jewish Community Center, he was a commissioner of the Frontier District from 1960 to 1962.

For the Philadelphia Council, which later became part of the Cradle of Liberty Council, Mr. Arkans was camping chairman from 1970 to 1977 and commissioner from 1983 to 1990, his son said.

Mr. Arkans went to his first national jamboree in 1957 in Valley Forge National Historical Park and attended world jamborees in 1967 in Farragut State Park, Idaho, and in 1971 at Asagiri Heights, Japan.

Since 1972, he had been camp inspector for the eastern Pennsylvania region of the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

From 1983 to 1985, he was vice chairman of program and literature for the National Jewish Committee on Scouting.

Chairman of the trustees board of the Oxford Circle Jewish Community Center in the 1990s, Mr. Arkans was a member of B'nai B'rith and Jewish War Veterans. In the 1990s, his son said, the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York honored him for his community work.

Besides his son Steven, Mr. Arkans is survived by his wife of 60 years, Florence; another son, Edward; and four grandchildren.

A funeral service was set for 11:30 a.m. today at Goldsteins' Rosenbergs' Raphael-Sacks, 310 Second Street Pike, Southampton. Burial will be in Shalom Memorial Park, Lower Moreland.

Contact staff writer Walter F. Naedele at 215-854-5607 or wnaedele@phillynews.com.

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