



Herb Laswell

PORT CHARLOTTE, Fla. -- Herbert B. Laswell, 91, Port Charlotte, and formerly Noblesville, died Dec. 9, 2010, in Port Charlotte. Herb was the last living charter member of Gamma Chapter of Phi Beta Mu-International Bandmasters Fraternity. He and 19 other distinguished band directors started Gamma Chapter in 1953.

Colonel Herb Laswell attended Bosse High School in Evansville under the direction of Claude B. Smith. At an early age he became an excellent French horn player which later earned him a scholarship to the University of Miami for one year before transferring to Indiana University. In 1941 his studies were interrupted when he entered the U.S. Army and was later commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant. After almost five years of service he returned to IU and earned his degree in August of 1946.

He was director of instrumental music for Noblesville High School from 1947-54. Laswell joined the Murat Shrine Temple Band in 1953 and was the director from 1955-69. He was the manager of the Operations Division of Indiana State Selective Service from 1963-73.

During his tenure in Noblesville he became active in the Indiana Music Educators Association serving as Executive Secretary for five years. He became President of the Music Division of the Indiana State Teachers Association meeting at Shortridge High School in Indianapolis. His Noblesville Marching Band earned first place at the Indiana State Fair Marching Contest in 1955. While at Noblesville Laswell developed a very fine concert band and choir program.

From 1956 to 1963 he developed an exceptional junior high band program at Westlane Junior High School in MSD Washington Township, Indianapolis. In 1963 he was recalled into the Army in an administrative position, retiring in 1979 with the rank of Colonel. From 1980 until his death he was active in two good concert bands of retirees: he was Director Emeritus of the North Port Concert Band and was also assistant conductor and librarian of the Port Charlotte Band. He played trumpet, French horn, and percussion in those bands.

He was married to Vera E. Laswell who preceded him in death.