



The Bolton Scholarship Fund

Investing in the future...

William F. Riley, Jr. Accounting Scholarship Established 2010

William Francis Riley, Jr. was born September 10, 1919 and moved to Bolton in the 1940's. From his Irish immigrant grandparents he inherited a strong work ethic and the desire to earn his own way. Endearingly called "Pat" by his high school friends, he was shy and unassuming, but strongly principled and well mannered.

Mr. Riley was an avid sports fan and participant. He enjoyed attending Hartford Whalers' games, bowling and golfing. He also played basketball in his earlier years. He walked for fitness and enjoyment in his later years, usually with his beloved dogs.

Mr. Riley served on, and chaired, the Bolton Board of Finance for many years. He firmly believed in ending each session with strong handshakes, no matter how heated the debates may have become. He attended schools in New York and Hartford and always had a strong interest in accounting and financial matters. He enjoyed his early training in computer science on the old punch card Univacs. On Saturdays, he would often take his daughters to his office at SPAN (Springfield Phoenix Aetna National), and teach them to punch cards for the cumbersome, giant computers and make Christmas banners with designs from programs that he ran. He became Chief Scheduler for Aetna Life Insurance Company from which he retired 1983 after more than twenty-five years of service.

Two of his three daughters, Lynn and Beverly, graduated from Bolton High School. Lynn was a member of the first graduating class in 1967, and Beverly graduated in 1971. His eldest daughter, Susan, graduated from Manchester High School in 1961, before Bolton had its own high school.

Mr. Riley served in the United States Navy during World War II. He entered the service on January 20, 1944 and was honorably discharged as a Radioman Third Class on December 28, 1945. Most of his time was spent on an LST (Landing Ship Tank), and he continued to be active in his LST 1097 organization until his passing. His service awards included the American Theatre Ribbon, the Asiatic-Pacific Ribbon, the Philippine Liberation Ribbon, and the World War II Victory Ribbon. His family received a Cold War Recognition Certificate honoring Mr. Riley and signed by Donald Rumsfeld. They were awaiting his Presidential Memorial Certificate to be signed by President George Bush. He was a long-term member of the Army-Navy Club in Manchester, CT and Chapter 1059 of the Coventry, CT VFW. Although he did not speak much of the war, the stories that he did relate were always light and happy and resembled "the wackiest ship in the Navy". He often spoke of the captain's cocker spaniel that resided on board with them.

For many years, Mr. Riley was plagued with heart disease and succumbed to his illness on October 4, 2001. He was bright and lucid and exhibited superior mental strength until his passing. A kind and gentle man, with a mentally strong spirit, Mr. Riley was loved by everyone who knew him. His family, which was so important to him, has established this scholarship in his memory.