

ARTHUR L. GRATIAS

Arthur Gratias was born on May 1, 1920, to Hugo and Katharine Gratias. He passed away on March 6, 2015, at the age of 94. He is survived by his wife Alice; his sons, Tom, Jim, and Doug; eight grandchildren; sixteen great grandchildren; and one great great grandchild.

Gratias was raised on a farm near Nora Springs, Iowa. He attended Rockford High School, graduating in 1937. He was a World War II veteran, drafted into the army in January of 1942. He was deployed overseas from October 1943 to October 1945, where he participated in many campaigns in Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central Europe. He was engaged in both the D-Day landing at Omaha Beach and the Battle of the Bulge. He received the Purple Heart after he was injured in France on August 16, 1944. He also received the Legion of Honor medal from the French government, which is France's highest distinction. It is bestowed on selected American veterans who risked their lives during World War II to fight on French soil.

He married his wife Alice on June 6, 1943, and they remained married for 71 years. In 1970 he graduated from Wartburg College and then went on to obtain his Master's Degree in school administration from UNI in 1972. During his career as an educator, he was a teacher and principal at Rudd-Rockford-Marble Rock school district and a member of the Nora Springs school board for 23 years.

He was involved with many organizations throughout his life, including serving as the master of Masonic Lodge #649, president of AARP chapter #2054, State Commander of the American Legion, and co-chair of the Mason City Economic Development Committee. He was also a member of the Good Shepherd Board, the Cerro Gordo Fair Board, and the Francis Lauer Youth Home Board.

Arthur Gratias was a Floyd County Republican. He served in the Iowa Senate from 1979–1987, and as Chair of the Senate Education Committee, during the 68th, 69th XX, 70th, and 71st General Assemblies.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF IOWA: That in the passing of the Honorable Arthur L. Gratias, the State has lost an honored citizen and faithful and useful public servant, and that the Senate by this resolution expresses its appreciation of his service to the State and tenders its sympathy and kindest regards to the members of his family.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That a copy of this resolution be spread upon the Journal of the Senate and that the Secretary of the Senate be instructed to forward an enrolled copy to the family of the deceased.

MICHAEL BREITBACH
DENNIS GUTH
MARY JO WILHELM
Committee