

**Burtis, Thomas R.** | 1918-2010

*Published Thursday, January 6, 2011*

Memorial for Thomas R. Burtis, 92, of Lubbock was to be 2 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 5, at St. John's United Methodist Church in Lubbock with the Rev. Archie Echols officiating. Burtis died Wednesday, Dec. 22, 2010.

Born May 26, 1918, in Decatur to Frederick William and Etta Mae (Hill) Burtis May, he married Pansy Eaves Young March 20, 1948, in Houston.

He enlisted in the National Guard in 1935 while still in high school and joined the U.S. Army in 1936 after graduating from Decatur High School. He served in the Army as an enlisted man for six years, as a warrant officer for 21 years and retired as a chief warrant officer-4 Dec. 31, 1962.

After retirement, he attended Texas Tech University where he graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree and later earned a master of arts degree. He also completed all but a dissertation for a doctoral degree, dropping out for health reasons.

Burtis was active in Union of Concerned Scientists, Center for Defense Information, Arms Control Association, National Peace Foundation, Peace Action, Council for a Livable World, Physicians for Social Responsibility and other public service organizations.

He was a longtime member of St. John's United Methodist Church, Methodist Men, Aldersgate Sunday school class and the ministry at St. John's. He was also a life member of the Retired Officers Association, Disabled American Veterans, Phi Kappa Phi honor society, Friends of the Lubbock Library, Knife and Fork Club and League of Women Voters.

Burtis was former vice president and longtime executive committee member of the Lubbock Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and former president of the Lubbock Ecumenical Council on Social Concerns.

He was preceded in death by son Thomas Ray Burtis Jr.; sister Naomi Ada Russell; half sister Anne Lorene Burtis; and half brother Bobby Burtis.

He is survived by his wife; daughter Tommie Jean Klise and husband, Bill, of Ruidoso, N.M.; 13 grandchildren; great-grandchildren; sister Mary Ruth Burtis of Sherman; and nieces and nephews.

Memorials may be made to Lubbock Meals on Wheels, St. John's United Methodist Church or a favorite charity.