

William (Bill) A. Behnke, 96, died November 24, 2020. He was born January 7, 1924 in Cleveland and a member of Willoughby United Methodist Church since 1946. Bill served with the United States Naval Reserve, 1943-1946 and then graduated with a Landscape Architecture degree from The Ohio State University in 1951, where he was later named a Distinguished Alumnus in 1978.

His landscape architecture career soon led to various professional partnerships from 1955 to 1970 when he became the managing partner of William A. Behnke Associates, Landscape Architects & Planners in Cleveland, Ohio until 1989, whereupon he retired. During his tenure as President of William A. Behnke Associates, Bill was also an associate professor at Kent State University, 1973-1974; President Ohio State Board Landscape Architectural Examiners, 1973; Vice President of the American Society of Landscape Architects, 1977-1979; and President of that same organization from 1980-1981. Other organizations he served include Ohio Board Unreclaimed Strip Mined Lands, Landscape Architecture Foundation, Trust for Public Lands, Ohio Arts Council, City of Cleveland Design Review Committee (formerly the Fine Arts Committee), Lake County Young Men's Christian Association, Cleveland Rotary, and Ohio Presbyterian Retirement Services.

Mr. Behnke was a life-long, Cleveland-area, resident who was proud to complete many important landscape architectural projects in Northeast Ohio. Three of those projects earned him a visit to the White House where he received national design awards bestowed to him by three different First Ladies. His largest impact can be felt by the revitalization of Cleveland's Lakefront and Riverfront locations including Northcoast Harbor, Heritage Parks, Gordon Park, and Whiskey Island.

Survivors are his wife, Jean Daniel Behnke; children, William Lee (Cheryl) Behnke, Deborah (Frank) Tolar, Mitchel Behnke and Mark (Patrice) Behnke; many grandchildren; great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. His first wife, Ginger (nee: Woolever) Behnke; parents, Walter and Constance (nee: Ireson) Behnke; brother, Theodore Behnke; and sister, Lolita Clayman, are deceased. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions to the Heritage Club of Lake County YMCA, 933 Mentor Ave., Painesville, OH 44077; or William A. Behnke Scholarship, c/o Austin E. Knowlton School of Architecture, The Ohio State University, 275 W. Woodruff Ave., Columbus, OH 43210; or Willoughby United Methodist Church Columbarium Fund.

