

Obituaries

Knut Wefald, attorney for 50 years and state senator

Knut Magnus Wefald, 90, an attorney in Hawley, Minn., for more than 50 years and a former DFL state senator, died Saturday at St. John's Hospital in Fargo, N.D.

Wefald was born in Hawley and graduated from high school there in 1918. He graduated from St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., in 1923 and moved to Washington, D.C., to become secretary for his father, Knud Wefald, who served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1923 to 1927.

He graduated from George Washington University Law School in 1929 and returned to Hawley to practice law. He was city attorney from 1931 to 1974. Wefald was elected mayor of Hawley in 1934 and served one term.

In 1946 a committee of businessmen in Moorhead, Minn., persuaded him to run for state Senate. He defeated James Garrity, the longtime Clay County attorney, and was reelected in 1950 and 1954.

During his 12 years in the Senate he was chairman of the Reapportionment and Public Institutions committees and was a member of the Retirement Commission, state Building Commission and a commission to study the practice of osteopathy.

Wefald was defeated in 1958 and returned to his Hawley law practice. He retired in 1983.

Wefald served on the Minnesota State Board of Law Examiners from 1936 to 1944. He was a member of the Minnesota, Seventh Judicial District and Clay County bar associations.

Survivors include Verna, his wife of 66 years; sons Knut of St. Louis Park, Harold of Gaithersburg, Md., and Martin of San Francisco; a daughter, Marguerite Bacon of Phoenix, Ariz., 13 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Services will be held at 2 p.m. today at the Hawley Lutheran Church.