

John Nimrod dies, was state senator 1973-83

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By LARRY FINLEY

Former state Sen. John J. Nimrod was very proud of a law he sponsored in the late 1970s that called for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance every day in Illinois elementary and secondary classrooms.

"He loved his country, and he wanted to make sure that no one forgot the Pledge of Allegiance and what it meant," said his son, Joseph.



John Nimrod

Mr. Nimrod, 86, died Sunday at Glenbrook Hospital in Glenview.

He represented the north suburban 4th District from 1973 until 1983.

Mr. Nimrod was of Assyrian heritage, and he served as president of the Assyrian Universal Alliance Foundation.

He also was president of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, an international organization of people from unrecognized or occupied territories.

When Mr. Nimrod was Niles Township's GOP committeeman, he developed a friendship with Richard B. Ogilvie, a Republican party leader who rose from Cook County sheriff to county board president to governor.

"He started out as a little guy," his son said. "Richard Ogilvie saw something in him. He took him under his wing and he took flight."

Mr. Nimrod was born in Chicago. He graduated from Lake View High School in 1940.

He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps in Europe during World War II and received a Bronze Star. After the war, he earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical and industrial engineering from Northwestern University.

He was recalled to active duty in 1950 for the Korean conflict. He served as an instructor in the Korean Military Advisory Group from 1950 to 1952, training Korean officers and working on engineering projects, his son said. He invented a machine that cleaned and cooked raw rice in the field so it didn't have to be shipped to a processing area and then returned to the front lines to feed the troops and civilians, his son said.

Mr. Nimrod's parents were refugees from Iran who fled during World War I, according to Homer Ashurian, general director of the AUA Foundation, a relief agency for Assyrian refugees. He took over the foundation after his sister, Helen James Schwarten, a refugee from Iran, died in 1999.

Other survivors include his wife, Dorothy; two daughters, Lizbeth Nimrod and Naomi Dickinson; another son, John J. Nimrod; six grandchildren, and three great grandchildren. His funeral was private. A memorial service is being planned.