Bruno William Waara, 93, passed away peacefully in his bed on Thursday June 11, 2015 surrounded by members of his extended family. Bruno lived with his loving daughter and son-in-law, Kathryn and Raymond Wieringa in Davenport, Iowa for several years and died after a brief battle with a series of strokes. Bruno was born on a small farm in Toivola, Minnesota in 1921, the fifth of nine children of Einar and Hilda Waara. The Waara's were Finnish immigrants who settled, cleared, and farmed forty acres and lived in a simple house without electricity or running water, and heated by a wood burning stove. Bruno was nicknamed 'Brownie' in his youth, and proved to be an excellent athlete at tiny Toivola High School, playing basketball with many of his brothers. His only surviving brother, Hugo Waara of Prescott, Arizona was also present at the time of Bruno's passing, and daily phone calls between the two Waara boys was a happy ritual between them in Bruno's later years.

Five Waara men returned safely after serving in WWII, and Bruno served with distinction, winning a bronze star after flying more than 25 missions as a pilot of 'the liberator', the giant B-24 bomber, in the Asiatic-Pacific theater. His humility and peace loving nature made him a reluctant story teller regarding his military service, but his family was extremely proud of his accomplishments.

After the war, Bruno completed his Master's Degree in Education at the University of Minnesota where he met his wife, Margaret (Madge) Cookson, and the family moved to the Chicago area where he began his career as a teacher at Arlington Heights High School in 1950. With his own hands, he built the house his family would live in across the street from the school and he eventually served first as the assistant principal, then for 17 years the principal of Arlington High until his retirement in 1979. As principal of Arlington, he was known for his calm demeanor and capacity to listen well to the concerns of both the faculty and the students. He was also active in the Rotary Club of Arlington.

Bruno's wife Madge Cookson died in 1977 after a year and a half battle with brain cancer, and Bruno cared for her in her last days with endless patience, tenderness and love. He showed the same kindness to a longtime companion in later life, Laverne Look. Bruno's eager willingness to help and his ability to fix almost anything made him a frequently called upon resource of his many friends and family. He could dive into almost any project, (often in his 'good' pants, to his families dismay) figure out what the problem was, and solve it. Bruno was well known as an avid and excellent golfer, and golf remained an active part of his life, even into his 90's. He won the Illinois State Amateur Left-Handed championship multiple times, last winning the Senior Flight in 1994 at the age of 72. He participated in several golf leagues in the Arlington Heights area, and his friendships on the golf course were a treasured part of his life. So skilled was he that in his later years, 'shooting his age' meant little to him, as he'd often score in the 70's late into his 80's!

After moving to Iowa in the mid 2000's to live with his daughter Kathy, Bruno became a well loved figure in the neighborhood, inspiring new friendships and affection with a brand new circle of his daughters neighbors and friends. He is also survived by his loving son, Scott Waara, who lives in California, and his devoted grand-daughter Molly Shough, who lives in Chicago. Scott and Molly were both able to be with Bruno at his passing. He is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews with whom he
shared a great mutual affection. He will be remembered with great love and affection by all that knew him, and sorely missed. A celebration of his life will be held at a future date with family and friends.

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