

OBITUARY

Richard E. Harpster

Richard E. Harpster, reporter, editor, columnist, photographer, public speaker, and radio commentator, died Friday, October 6, 2006 at Easton Hospital after a brief illness. He was 82 years old.



Harpster

Born: He was a son of the late William Herrold and Erma Smith Harpster.

Personal: A native of Danville, Pa, he lived in Washington, NJ since 1935. He was a 1942 graduate of the old Washington High School and earned a degree in journalism from Rider College in Trenton in 1949. After graduating, he began his career as a reporter for the *Washington Star*. In 1950, he joined the *Newark Evening News* covering Warren County for 22 years. When the *Newark News* ceased publication in 1972, he became editor of the *Phillipsburg Free Press* until 1975.

His coverage of Warren County politics won him wide acclaim. An outline of his coverage in the county was featured in a publication of The Center for the Analysis of Public Issues of Princeton. In 1979, he was selected by the *Easton Express* as one of Warren County's seven power brokers, along with the late Governor

Robert B. Meyner; State Senator Wayne Dumont; Assemblyman and Chairman of the State Republican Committee, Garabed Haytaian, and Freeholder, Irene Smith. Throughout his career, he was known as "muckraker" for his blistering attacks against crooked politicians and government entities.

He joined the staff of the *Morristown Daily Record* in 1983 where he covered politics and crime, wrote columns and editorials, and served as Sunday Editor. In 1989, during the administration of Governor Thomas Kean, he became Public Information Officer for the State Department of Community Affairs. He retired from full time work in 1989 and wrote columns for the *Star-Gazette* of Hackettstown, the *Warren Reporter* of Washington, *Today in Hunterdon* in Flemington, the *Knowlton News* in Columbia, and *Fifty Plus* in Succasunna.

He covered the story of the Tocks Island Dam from its inception in 1962 to its demise in 1975. He was the only newsman who reported on the plight of the Delaware River property owners and their aggressive treatment by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In 1973, he won a nationwide editorial-writing contest

The Express - Times: October 7, 2006

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