OBITUARIES

David Johnson

David Simonds Johnson, 80, of Annapolis, died Dec. 17 at BayWoods of Annapolis.

Born June 29, 1924, in Portersville, Calif., Mr. Johnson attended University of California Berkeley, Reed College and Harvard University and earned a bachelor of arts degree in 1948 and a masters degree in meteorology in 1949 from University of California Los Angeles.

Mr. Johnson served in the Army Air Force during World War II from 1943 to 1946.

He worked for the US Weather Bureau in Boise, Idaho as a meteorological aid and the University of California Los Angeles and the Pineapple Research Institute, as an associate meteorologist.

Subsequently he worked for the Weather Bureau as one of four founding members of the National Weather Satellite Center in Suitland, Md. During his 26-year career, he served as director and was first assistant administrator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for Satellites and Data before retiring in 1982.

A leader in weather satellite programs, he helped introduce two series of satellites, which provided observations of the entire earth twice daily to weather services around the world and time-lapse motion photography to specialists in the western hemisphere. He led negotiations between the Weather Bureau and NASA for the first weather satellite, launched in 1960 and the later commercial Landsat program in the United States.

He conceptualized and supported operation of direct broadcast of weather satellite data to countries around the world and pressed for the launch and operation of geostationary weather satellites.

Internationally, he served as a member of two joint working groups of the International Committee on Space Research and the International Council of Scientific Unions.

As president of the American Meteorology Society, he led an early 1960s delegation with the State Meteorological Administration of the Peoples Republic of China for a bilateral agreement, which remains in effect today. He also established the weather hotline to allow the exchange of weather data with Moscow, which is now the current Global Telecommunications System operated by the World Meteorological Organization.

He also formed the Coordination Group of Meteorological Satellites, a model for nonpolitical intergovernmental groups, which recently expanded to include research programs.

Following his retirement, he served as committee chair of the National Academy of Sciences for modernization of the National Weather Service. He also served as consultant to the World Meteorological Organization, writing a number of papers used in assessing and coordinating the world's weather satellite programs.

An avid sailor and wine collector, he received the Gold Medal from the Department of Commerce, the NASA Exceptional Service Medal and was elected a fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. In addition, the National Space Club inaugurated the David S. Johnson Award, sponsored by NOAA for achievement in the science of remote sensing.

He was the husband of the late Betty Jeanne Reed, who died in 1973 and the late Peg McFarland, who died in 1988.

Surviving are three stepdaughters, Margaret McFarland Garman, Martha McFarland Tyler and Molly McFarland Burke; five step-grandchildren; and three step-great-grandchildren.

Funeral services and burial are private. Arrangements are by John M. Taylor Funeral Home in Annapolis.