

## **Walter Etling, Miami Businessman and Civic Leader Dies**

GAINESVILLE, FL: Long-time Miami real estate broker and civic activist Walter Etling died at 88 years old in Gainesville, Florida on Friday, April 25, 2014.

Etling left a legacy behind that will long be remembered. Raised in Nutley, New Jersey, he came to the University of Miami during WW II while in the U.S. Navy V-12 program. He would later attend Georgia Tech in Atlanta, GA, but return to Miami to receive his degree in Economics. He would remain involved in the University for much of life. He served as a Trustee and as President of the University's Alumni Association (named Alumnus of the Year '71), Athletic Federation and Sports Hall of Fame and was instrumental in developing the popular "U" logo for the school along with his great friend artist Bill Bodenheimer and publicist Julian Cole. He was a member of the University of Miami Kappa Sigma Epsilon Beta Chapter (Grand Master and Alumnus of the Year) and was "tapped" for University's highest honorary society, Iron Arrow.

As President of the Walter Etling Company he secured the old Miami News Tower in the early 1960s for the Government Services Administration to be the central Cuban refugee center. Etling re-named the building the "Freedom Tower" and managed it for many years. At one point his real estate and property management companies leased and managed over 30 major buildings in Miami and beyond. An entrepreneur, his projects included introducing fast food to Spain in the late 1960s, with one of his 6 KFC franchise units ranking as the most successful in the world.

Etling served two terms as foreman of the Dade County Grand Jury. He also worked to better his community on many civic committees through the years and helped raise funds for a numerous causes including Big Brother/Big Sisters of Greater Miami (who named him Man of the Year). He was a longtime Director of the Key Biscayne Bank and Trust Company and a member of numerous business organizations and clubs including the Orange Bowl Committee, Miami Club (President) and Riviera Country Club, where he loved to play golf.

A painter, musician and former drum major of the UM Band of the Hour, Etling was active in many cultural organizations and served as president or chairman of the Miami Museum of Science, Chopin Society, Cultural Center Group, and Napoleonic Society of America Foundation.

Etling was predeceased by a sister Carol Thompson. He is survived by his daughter Tina Banner (Michael), son Russell, former wife Ann, granddaughter Jennifer Cassisi (Chris), 2 great-grandchildren Reese and Rex Cassisi, brother-in-law Art Thompson, and nephews and niece Scott Thompson (Daryl), Mark Thompson, Curt Thompson (Heather) and Heidi Nosich (Jim).

There will be no services but the family ask that contributions be made in his memory to Haven Hospice, 4200 NW 90th Blvd., Gainesville, FL 32606

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