



## Clayton Nielsen

April 17, 1923 - March 29, 2011

Clayton H. Nielsen

RACINE- Clayton H. "Clayt" Nielsen, 87 passed away on March 29, 2011 at Wheaton Franciscan Hospital- All Saints.

Clayt was born in Racine, on April 17, 1923 to the late Carl Henry and Thomine (nee: Anderson) Nielsen and was a man who lived the American Dream.

Clayt attended Racine Schools and entered the Park High School Hall of Fame for the numerous business and civic organizations that he led throughout his life. Clayt entered the United States Air Force graduating from airplane mechanics school and was an instrument specialist in B24 and B17's as well as a specialist in welding aluminum and machining. Clayt returned from service and ran Henry Nielsen Blacksmiths and Ornamental Shop. His brother Harry, of Racine, later joined him and they changed the name to Henry Nielsen Iron Works and in 1954 Nielsen Iron Works that operated until 1983 when he joined his sons forming Nielsen Building Systems Inc. of Caledonia. Clayt was a civic leader serving on numerous boards including Racine Zoological Society later serving as Chairman and co-inventors of Safari Days, which ran for many years as a Family Fun day leading hundreds of volunteers. In July of 1973, Safari Days was called Clayton Nielsen Day. He touched all of Racine residents lives in business and his leadership in organizations including United Way, President and the New Building Lead Fund raiser for the Racine Theater Guild that you enjoy today later serving as

its President, he received the Rotary International's highest award receiving the Paul P. Harris Fellow Award. Clayt served on the board of First Federal Savings and Loan and later as president and board member Pioneer Savings and Loan and a board member of TCF Bank. He along with Dr. Haley started and ran the first City of Racine Volleyball League. In 1968, Clayt was award named Citizen of the year by the VFW as well as the Journal Times Man of the Year. Clayt served on the Wustum Museum and Park Commission also served on the Mt Pleasant Police and Fire Commission, boards of the YMCA, Co-Chair of the American Cancer Society. Other awards and activities include Good Citizen Medal from the Sons of the American Revolution, served on the University of Wisconsin - Parkside Site Selection Committee, Trustee at Grace Lutheran Church, President of the Racine Country Club, originator of the Golden Key Ceremony, a staple award of the Racine Chamber of Commerce/RAMAC, Chairman of Racine County Boy Scouts, Elks Club member, President of Racine Downtown Rotary, member of Fifth St Yacht Club, Dania Society, Danish Brotherhood, German Club, Northside Development Committee, Tri-County Contractors Association and Wisconsin Steel Fabricators Association.

Clayt with his brother Harry provided many good jobs for Racine residents at Nielsen Iron Works donating materials and labor for the Racine Zoo cages and the numerous cement animal sculptures that we all played on as kids. He loved the City of Racine and worked tirelessly to make Racine a wonderful place to live.

Clayt is survived by his son, James Nielsen, grandsons Ross (Elizabeth and great granddaughter Charlize) and grandson Alex (great granddaughter Addyson ), son Dale Nielsen ( Beth ), grandson, Christo ( Tracy ) Nielsen and granddaughter Erica Nielsen ( great grandson, Logan Fesko) Grandchildren of Bruce ( Sandi ) , grandson, Scott ( Kathryn) and granddaughter, Jennifer Nielsen.

He is also survived by Harry W. Nielsen and family, sisters-in-law Terry Collins and family and Lucille Siwakowski and family.

Clayton was preceded in death by his parents, Harry and Thomine Nielsen, wife, Irene in December of 2005, son, Bruce Nielsen in June of 2010, sister, Hazel and brothers-in-law, Max Collins and John Siwakowski.

Funeral Services will be held at Sturino Funeral Home on Saturday, April 2, 2011 at 4 p.m. Visitation for will be held from 2:00- 4:00 with service starting at 4 p.m. Friends and family will be invited to the Fifth Street Yacht Club for fellowship and to honor his absolutely wonder life that Clayt had.

In lieu of flowers, memorials to Racine Zoo, 2131 N. Main Street, Racine, WI 53403, Racine Theater Guild, 2519 Northwestern Ave. Racine, WI 53404, The Republican Party of Wisconsin, or the charity of one's choice have been suggested by the Nielsen family.

Clayt lived his life right to the end by coming to Nielsen Building Systems every day. He passed away while enjoying the company of his close friends of the Lost and Found Club, a group of men that had lost their soul mates and would get together every Tuesday night! Clayton Nielsen did touch your life in Racine, even if you never met him.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR 2. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

Sturino Funeral Home  
3014 Northwestern Avenue  
Racine, WI 53404  
(262) 632-4479  
info@sturinofuneralhome.com

## Service

APR 2. 4:00 PM (CT)

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