

NELSON, Raymond Joseph Home builder and philanthropist, Raymond J. Nelson died September 20, 2010 at the age of 90 years. Predeceased by his wife, Marie, September 30, 2009, they were married December 29, 1952. He is survived by daughters Allyson Nelson (Richard Gaudreau), Glenda Elkow (Terry), Tannis Boissonnault (Phil), and son, Scott Nelson (Hilda), eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. At his death, Ray remained the oldest person in the world to have received a heart transplant. The operation was performed December 27, 1999 at the University Hospital in Edmonton, AB. He was 79 years old at the time. He was grateful every day for his new heart and it sustained him for over ten more years. Born June 2, 1920 in Frontier, SK. Ray was the last living descendant of Nels and Emma Nelson. His parents moved from Fosston, MN to Saskatchewan in 1911. A couple of years later they established a new home on a land grant south of Frontier, which they received from the railroad. There they raised their family of six children that included sisters Esther and Evelyn, and brothers Stanley, Austin, Raymond and Willard. After serving in the Canadian Armed Forces for four-and-a-half years during World War II, Ray was discharged April 23, 1946. He moved to Lloydminster to work with his brother, Austin, at Beaver Lumber. Together they founded Nelson Lumber Company Ltd. in a granary on March 1, 1949. Nelson Homes began in 1952. That division of the company designed, produced and delivered modern pre-engineered panelized home packages to families throughout Western Canada, the United States and into Asia. The Company was sold in October 2003 to an employee group. When the business was sold it had over 800 employees, had shipped over 30,000 homes, operated retail building supply stores in Lloydminster, Edmonton, Bonnyville, Grand Prairie and Slave Lake, as well as three modular home plants named SRI Homes, and the Hemstock & Hearthstone assisted living retirement residences. A respected entrepreneur and businessman, Ray was a founding director (1975 to 1992) of Alberta Energy Company (now EnCana Corporation). Other noteworthy directorships included Alberta Power Limited, British Columbia Forest Products, Economic Council of Canada, and Alberta Treasury Branches. In 1996 he was inducted into the Junior Achievement of Northern Alberta Business Hall of Fame. In his community of Lloydminster, he was a member of the Lloydminster Rotary Club from 1947. He served in many community roles including the Lloydminster Municipal Hospital Board, the Lloydminster & District Agricultural Exhibition Association and the Lloydminster Foundation. He was honoured for his many contributions to the City in 1991 at a community-sponsored appreciation event and again in 2006 when a group of citizens successfully initiated the process to have the portion of Yellowhead Highway 16 within the Lloydminster city limits named Ray Nelson Drive. He was awarded the first annual Lifetime Achievement Award by the Lloydminster Chamber of Commerce in 1998. The Edmonton Symphony Orchestra never performs anywhere outside of Edmonton, except in Lloydminster, all because of Ray. Due to that special relationship they recognized him with an Honorary Membership, an honor bestowed on only three other people. A thoughtful and creative man, he survived Grade 12 as the only boy in a class of 13 in Frontier, SK. Getting a university education was not an option. Since then he has received three honorary doctorates, an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from the University of Alberta in 1998, a Doctorate of Humane Letters from Briercrest Family of Schools in 2005, and a Doctorate of Laws from Trinity Western University in 2008. Ray regularly expressed a deep gratitude for his country and a lasting commitment to the fact that we cannot serve God without serving mankind. He sought many practical ways to quietly exhibit his deep personal faith, including playing an integral role in the formation and ongoing success of the annual National Canadian Prayer Breakfast and the annual Alberta Premier's Prayer Breakfast, co-founding Southridge Community Church and Senior Citizen's Home. As

well, he had a particular passion for helping young people realize their potential and ultimately their dreams. He worked closely with the American Management Association to establish a Canadian version of their Operation Enterprise program, which ran for several years. He was a busy, visionary man all his life. Retirement was never an option. His mind never stopped thinking of business opportunities as well as ways to improve and grow his community, yet there was always time for his family. As his children were growing up he spent time with them going to the lake, skiing, attending horse shows, and spending time with family and friends. Those around him knew him as a man of deep faith and much compassion, with great personal charm and a wonderful sense of humour. Driven by dreams and a vision to make things happen, he quietly used his influence to bring many worthy ideas to reality, resulting in the development of many infrastructure projects used by so many people in Lloydminster and area, and the Provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. If he had an idea for something, it was almost impossible to persuade him otherwise. The Funeral Service to honor and celebrate his life will be held at 11:00 a.m., Tuesday, September 28 in the Stockade Convention Centre at the Lloydminster Exhibition Grounds, 5521 - 49 Avenue, Lloydminster, SK. Condolences may be sent through McCaw Funeral Service, Lloydminster, Alberta. If you so wish, in lieu of flowers, memorial tributes may be made to the Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute or the Northern Alberta Renal (kidney) Program c/o University Hospital Foundation, 8440 - 112 Street N.W., Edmonton, AB T6G 2B7 or to one of the many Lloydminster community charities of your choice.

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