



Melvin Fritz Nielsen

JUL 19, 1910 - OCT 7, 2004



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MELVIN FRITZ NIELSEN 7/19/1910 - 10/07/2004 Mel was born and raised in Oakland, graduated from Fremont High School in 1928 and studied engineering at Oakland Polytechnic College. He excelled in sports especially tennis and baseball, playing with a semi-pro baseball team in Oakland for several years. Mel always supported himself, beginning as a paperboy, advancing into musical entertainment and automotive services including the Studebaker Co. and tire recapping business. In 1937, Mel married Esperanza, with whom he had two children, Lance and Sheila. In 1941 at the age of 31, he joined the Navy and was stationed in Alameda County. After the war, he moved his family from Kensington to Lafayette and with a partner opened the Lafayette Tire Service on Mt. Diablo Blvd. In 1948 Mel was elected Commander of the Lafayette American Legion Post 517, the first commander who had served in WW2. He became active in the Rotary Club and recently received an award from the Lafayette branch for 50 years of perfect attendance. He also was active in local politics serving as the Fire Commissioner and Water Commissioner in the town of Lafayette. In 1958, he was elected Contra Costa County Supervisor from the Second District, which he represented for 8 years. During his tenure, the voters approved the B.A.R.T. system. In 1962, Mel married his second wife Helen and became father to her two children Sally and Ken. After leaving politics, Mel entered the title business working for the Title Insurance and Trust Company and at the age of 65 was required to retire. Shortly after that he was persuaded to become the sales manager for First American Title Guarantee and soon became a partner and senior vice president. During his time at First American, Mel was very active in the California Home Builders Association and created the subdivision department in First American that specifically targeted the needs of commercial developers. In 1999, he was inducted into the California Home Builders Association Hall of Fame. Mel retired in 2000 at the age of 90 and died of natural



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causes at 94. In addition to Helen, his wife of 42 years, Mel is survived by his children; Lance Nielsen of Dublin, Sheila Gilmore of La Jolla, Sally Baker of Oakland and Ken Nielsen of Orinda, 10 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. Family services will be private. In lieu of flowers please send donations to the Lafayette Rotary Club, PO Box 103, Lafayette CA 94549.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Melvin by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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