



J. Nelson Poirier

July 1, 1915 - June 10, 2019

J. Nelson Poirier, of Clearwater FL died just 20 days shy of his 104th birthday. Nelson, or Nels as he was often called, was born in Rochester, New York on July 1, 1915 and became a champion pole-vaulter in high school, in addition to excelling at skiing, speed skating, tennis, bowling and softball. He left high school for a year to assist his family when his father had an accident but eventually graduated and continued his studies at Mechanics Institute, now Rochester Institute of Technology, with a focus on machine design.

Introduced to Marjorie (Margie) Barg on a blind date in 1938, it was love at first sight. In May 1941 they married and during the next 14 years children Lynne, Larry, Laurie and David arrived. Nelson worked for several companies but settled at Eastman Kodak, where he continued until his retirement in 1977, working on “classified” fire control systems and “top secret” surveillance programs.

In his younger years Nelson, who enjoyed sailing, bought his first fixer upper. He and a friend patched it up to woo Margie, but on its virgin voyage it sank in the Genesee River. Compromising with her, years later he purchased his first power boat - a thirty-six foot Christ Craft. It was followed by two larger boats and he and Margie became members of the Rochester Yacht Club. He continued there as an Emeritus member until he was over 100.

After his retirement and tired of winter, they moved to Pinellas County, Florida. The woman he loved more than anyone died in 1998, but Nelson’s life was far from over. He was the President of his local Masters’ Association and he became the neighbors “go to guy” for just about any household problem and that continued almost to the moment he died. “Have tools will help” was his motto.

Nelson passed his last driving test at 97 and renewed his license at 103. He regularly drove to the store, doctor’s appointments and lunch with friends. He enjoyed living in his own home on his own terms, solving crosswords and sipping a Manhattan every now and

then. He stayed healthy until just a few months before his death.

Nelson was predeceased by his wife Margie, and son Larry; he is survived by his daughters Lynne (Jim), Laurie (Glenn), son David and daughter-in-law Patricia. He is also survived by four grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and wonderful friends and neighbors.

A legend has left us. Nelson saw and lived through so much of our history – depressions, wars, hurricanes, terrorism and terrible politics, but he also raised a great family, had strong friendships and enjoyed an incredibly full life. He now joins Margie and new adventures await them.

A private gathering will be held in the future. In lieu of flowers the family hopes you would consider supporting Heritage Village (11909 125th Street N., Largo, FL 33774) a historic museum close to his and Margie's heart or Suncoast Hospice (5771 Roosevelt Blvd. Clearwater, FL 33760) who helped Nelson in the last months of his life.