

Biographical Information on David L. Nelson

David L. Nelson was born July 5, 1921, in Kaukauna, Wis. He was the third-oldest in a family of four girls and two boys. David Nelson's father, Lewis, managed Badger Tissue Mills, a converting mill in Kaukauna, for 35 years, and was president of the Farmers and Merchant Bank in Kaukauna. Lewis Nelson served as mayor of Kaukauna 1937-40 and 1942-46.



David L. Nelson:

- Attended parochial and public schools in Kaukauna, Wis.
- Graduated from the Marquette University College of Business Administration in Milwaukee, Wis., in 1943 and became a certified public accountant in 1951.
- Met Rita Randall while attending college in Milwaukee.
- Married Rita Sept. 6, 1943, while he was serving with the U.S. Army at Pomona College in Claremont, Calif. They were married for 73 years.
- Served three years in the U.S. Army including with the 103rd Infantry Division in Europe during World War II.
- Worked for 3 ½ years in marketing at Western Condensing Company, Appleton, Wis., which turned cheesemaking waste into livestock feed.
- Raised three sons – Thomas, Richard and John.
- Son John preceded him in death.
- Served as an investigator for the Internal Revenue Service from 1950-53 in Green Bay, Wis.
- Entered the communications business in 1953, becoming chief financial officer for both the Post Corporation, publisher of the Appleton (Wis.) Post-Crescent, and the Green Bay (Wis.) Newspaper Company, publisher of the Press-Gazette, owned by the Minahan and Torinus families.
- When the two companies split in 1962, he became chief financial officer and chief operating officer of the Post Corp., taking it into electronic media with the purchase of WLUK-TV in Green Bay, Wis., in 1965, WLUC in Marquette, Mich.; and stations in Eau Claire, Wis.; and Rochester, NY, along with several radio stations.
- Left the newspaper when the company was acquired by Canadian communications company Thomson Corp. in 1984.
- Formed partnerships to acquire radio stations WAXX, WAYY, WECL, WIAL and WEAQ in Eau Claire, Wis.; KIRX, KTUF and KRXL in Kirksville, MO; KFJB and KXIA in Marshalltown, Iowa; and KVOX-AM & FM in Fargo, N.D.
- Through partnerships, acquired Holiday Travel Service in Eau Claire, Wis., and Winnebago Color Press in Menasha, Wis. Served as an officer and director of both until his death.
- He was a longtime member of the Green Bay (Wis.) Yacht Club and avid supporter of lighthouse restoration and historic preservation in the Fox Valley region of northeast Wisconsin.
- David died July 18, 2017, at age 96, in De Pere, Wis., leaving an estate gift exceeding \$100 million to the family's donor-advised fund within the Appleton, Wis.-based Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region.