

Is your membership expiring?

- ◆ Your membership expires on December 31 of the year shown in the e-mail subject line for **e-mail** newsletter deliveries, or following your name on the address label for **U.S. mail** newsletter deliveries.
- ◆ The membership form can be found at https://vipclubmn.org/ClubForms/MEMBERSHIP_FORM.pdf
- ◆ **MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS:** check the Membership website at [Club Membership \(vipclubmn.org\)](http://ClubMembership(vipclubmn.org)) OR e-mail membership@vipclubmn.org OR mail your question to VIP CLUB P.O. Box 21903, Eagan, MN 55121.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2024

Old Timers' Reunion **November 7, 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.** at the Lost Spur Golf and Event Center, 2750 Sibley Memorial Hwy in Eagan.

2025

Holiday Party **January 5** at the Lost Spur Golf and Event Center, 2750 Sibley Memorial Hwy, Eagan. Details TBD.

Volunteer Recognition Luncheon **April 16** at Joseph's Grill, 140 Wabasha Street South, Saint Paul. Details TBD.

Syttende Mai **May 16** is the tentative date and Casper's Cherokee of Eagan, 4625 Nicols Road the likely location. Details TBD.

Annual Reunion Picnic **mid-June**, most likely returning to the Eagan Central Park Pavilion, 1497 Central Pkwy. Details TBD.

Roseville Good Old Days **September 11** at the Rosetown American Legion Post, 700 County Road C West in Roseville. Details TBD.

2024 Event Details:

Old Timers' Reunion is on **November 7, 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.** at the Lost Spur Golf and Event Center, 2750 Sibley Memorial Hwy in Eagan. There will be a cash bar and a "Make Your Own Sandwich" bar. Payment of \$13 will be collected at the sandwich bar. The **Elections** of 2025 VIP Club board members will take place during the event. If you know of someone who is interested in becoming a board member, contact **Harvey Taipale** at hjtaipale@comcast.net or 651-357-6033. Check out the <https://vipclubmn.org/activities> website and your e-mail/evite for details.

No e-mail/evite? Contact one of the Old Timers' Reunion coordinators with questions or to RSVP your attendance.:

Paul Hove at paul@paulhove.com or 651-738-4908, or *Boni Westberg* at volunteerboni@gmail.com or 612-418-6206,

VIP Club 2025 Bimonthly Board Meetings are scheduled the first Wednesday of the month, beginning in February. We meet at the Eagan Wescott Library. Club members may sit in if curious about club business. Contact the president two days prior for access.

SOCIAL REPORT



Roseville Good Old Days The 2024 Unisys RGOD reunion, held on September 12 at the Rosetown American Legion Post, was a great time! There were more than 120 folks in attendance this year. Check out <https://t.ly/VWGnM> for event photos, or check out the <https://vipclubmn.org/gallery.html> page for links to the RGOD photos, taken as usual by David Wilhelm. Many thanks to David for the continual snapshots! If you couldn't make it, we missed seeing you! Mark your calendar for September 11, 2025 when we hope to see you at next year's event. See prior event history at <https://vipclubmn.org/activities.html#RGOD>.



Dave Kleba and Paul Dickson

Dave Wilhelm

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



The leaves are changing color and that’s a sign that fall is here. As I get older, the seasons seem to come and go much faster than in my youth. I’m thankful to experience each new one. My wife Kathy and I recently returned from a trip to Finland and Norway where we visited relatives of Kathy’s father up in northern Finland. We were impressed with the hospitality shown by the people and the beauty of the land. Finland is claimed to be the “happiest country in the world!”

The VIP Club board recently met to conduct club business. If you remember from the last newsletter, Unisys no longer does the printing and mailing, so the September/October newsletter was handled by a commercial printer. We reviewed how the new process went. Currently, 81 of our members get the newsletter mailed to them. We found that it took one week from the time we sent the data to the printer until the recipients received their copy. The bill was \$351.36, of which \$273 was for printing and the remainder was for postage and tax. This works out to \$4.34 per mailed newsletter! We send out six issues per year so the cost to the club for this service per year is currently over \$2,100. We owe a big thanks to Unisys for providing this benefit to the club for so many years! This expense is not sustainable with our current dues structure. In the upcoming months the board will look at ways that we can reduce this cost. One thought is to reduce the size of the newsletter from eight pages to six pages. Another is to go to a quarterly newsletter. If you are currently receiving a mailed copy but could access it electronically, you could let us know and save the club \$26 per year. Then, you can print the electronic copy at home if you like.

On November 7, we will host the Old Timers’ Reunion at the Lost Spur Golf and Event Center in Eagan. Evite invitations have gone out and replies to let us know you are coming were already due. See details on page 1, and contact a coordinator if needed. In lieu of the \$8.00 bag lunches offered in the past, this year Lost Spur will provide a “make-your-own” sandwich bar for \$13.00. As in past years, there will be a cash bar. During the event we will have a very short business meeting to conduct our yearly election of club officers and directors. I hope to see you there!

The board is always looking for people willing to help plan and conduct our club events. If you are willing to help, or have some ideas to share, please talk to or e-mail any board member to let us know so we can get you involved.

Enjoy the fall months and stay healthy!
Jim Andrews, VIP Club President

THANK YOU, VETERANS

Veterans Day

History of Veterans Day from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (<https://department.va.gov/veterans-day/history-of-veterans-day/>):



“World War I – known at the time as ‘The Great War’ – officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of ‘the war to end all wars.’

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America’s veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.”

Thank You to all who served our country!

Armed Forces Day is for those still in their uniform.

Veterans Day is for those who hung up their uniform.

Memorial Day is for those who never made it out of their uniform.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Richard Herwig & Roxann Snyder, Burnsville, MN
- Kathleen Schmitt, Woodbury, MN
- Mark A. Vasquez, Blaine, MN

LEGACY STORY

Recognizing Grace Hopper

The following text was extracted from <https://spectrum.ieee.org/from-punch-cards-to-python>; the link was submitted by Donald Leichtweis, Capt. USN, Ret.

An IEEE MILESTONE plaque was mounted in the Moore School Building lobby at the University of Pennsylvania on May 7, 2024 (see graphic that follows).

The historical significance of the compiler is the importance of how it affected the modern computer: A compiler is a computer program that translates computer code written in mathematical programming into a computer language such as English.

The invention of the compiler led to the Information Age and the beginning of the IT industry.

Grace Hopper was one of the first programmers of the Harvard Mark I computer. She was a pioneer of computer programming, and she invented and coined the term “compiler.” Hopper popularized the idea of machine-independent programming languages. In 1957, the FLOW-MATIC programming language was used in the UNIVAC, the first commercial computer. FLOW-MATIC led to the development of COBOL (Common Business-Oriented Language), patented in 1960. Her work also led to the implementation of standards for testing computer systems and components, most significantly for early programming languages such as FORTRAN (Formula Translation) and COBOL. Hopper worked on many teams and programs, her inventions were promoted/demonstrated by many lecturers at the University of Pennsylvania, and she was often referred to as “Amazing Grace.” She retired from the Navy as Rear Admiral, and her importance is widely recognized and appreciated worldwide.

our 60-chapter Legacy Anthology online for the world to read. In addition, we’ve posted 215 ‘Our Stories’ to date. The top five stories, in my opinion, are:

➤ **4th runner-up:** From before the Legacy Committee started; a reprint of a Minnesota Monthly, July 2005 newspaper article. It was first published as “The Original Geek Squad” by James P. Lenfestey, <http://vipclubmn.org/Articles/AGaggleOfGeeks.pdf>.

➤ **3rd runner-up:** Dr. George Champine’s historical article found by Keith Myhre in the Hagley Museum archives, www.vipclubmn.org/Articles/TheFirstComputerCompany.pdf.

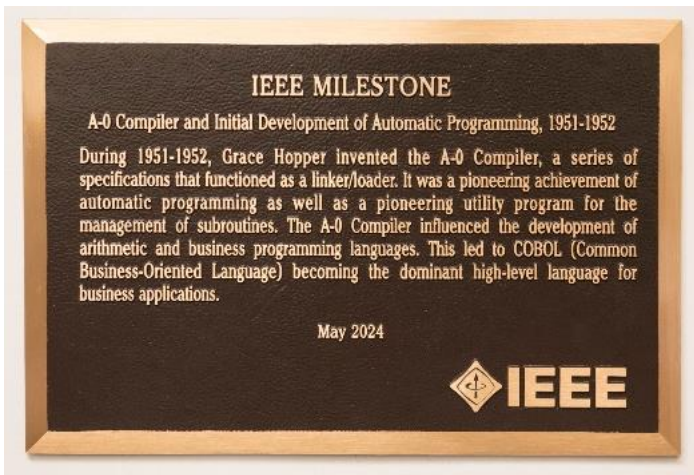
➤ **2nd runner-up:** Listing the YouTube links to videos from Mark Greenia, Director of the Computer History Archives Project (CHAP), https://vipclubmn.org/Articles/CHAP_SummaryRev1.pdf.

➤ **1st runner-up:** Establishment of a permanent artifact display at the Lawshe Memorial Museum, <http://vipclubmn.org/Articles/DreamRealization.pdf>. Thanks to Chad Roberts and Matt Carter.

➤ **The best:** A public television documentary at <http://vipclubmn.org/Articles/TPTclips.pdf> links the primary hour-long video as well as several outtakes. Seven VIP Club members, former employees, were interviewed by producer Kevin Dragseth for inclusion in the video. Dr. Tom Misa is the featured narrator. Special thanks to Dale Weeks who spearheaded the documentary fundraising. Thanks to Keith Myhre who provided documentary theme outlining, and to Unisys’ VP Chuck Lefebvre for cohosting the October 2019 premiere event.

Dick Lundgren: “*I think that as the original Legacy Committee members, we can now say ‘well done’ and watch/read/listen as the last few Legacy Anthology holes are plugged.*”

LABenson



BTW: Did you read the *Grace Hopper Lecture* article on page 4 of the September/October newsletter? I thought that a watch/listen for an hour of the link provided by Mike Adelman via Paul Dickson was quite enjoyable. Hopper’s 1982 lecture was classified until recently. In this (Nov/Dec 2024) newsletter there is an obituary for futurist Brian Toren. Dr. Hopper’s talk could have been as a futurist; I understand why her talk was classified then. Personally, I met then-Commodore Hopper on a plane in the mid-80s. Bless her!

LABenson.

A Look Back?

Hereunder is a repeat of the [May 2024 Our Stories’ Epilogue](#): After a 2008 meeting with Dr. Tom Misa at Plant 8, Dick Lundgren asked, “*When will we be done?*” We had no answer then; however, we now have accomplished most of the goals of Telling the Story via

ERA Oral History Project

This article was written for our newsletter by Barbara Sommers and Carson Tomony. Barbara is conducting ERA history interviews for the Ramsey County Historical Society.

In early 2024, the Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) received a grant from the Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grants program—also known as a Legacy Grant—for an oral history project documenting the history of Engineering Research Associates (ERA) in St. Paul, Minnesota.

ERA, a very early computer company, was formed in 1946 by World War II codebreakers. It became a leader in the national developing computer industry, building some of the fastest computers in the world. The company lasted for six years before being sold to

Remington Rand in 1952 with the hopes that a larger company could better support its growing research and development needs. Drawing on the name of the computers it was selling, Remington Rand formed the UNIVAC Division in the company and incorporated ERA into the division. Through the years, UNIVAC was sold and merged several more times, beginning when Remington Rand merged with Sperry Corporation in 1955, then again when the company became Sperry UNIVAC in 1973, when it became Sperry in 1979, and when Unisys was formed through the merger of Sperry and Burroughs in 1986. In the meantime, Control Data Corporation (CDC) spun off from the company to form its own company in 1957, and Cray Research, Inc. spun off from CDC in 1972. The logos on the VIP website document these changes.

The purpose of this project is to use oral history interviews to help document the legacy of ERA, Inc. and its extant subsidiaries in the early United States computer technology industry. The basic or guiding question for this project is: What impact did the ERA location in Minnesota have on the development of major state computer-based technology industries, including medical technology industries? *What is the ERA legacy?*

Narrators for this project have information about the early years of the computer industry in Minnesota and about the companies that continued making and selling computers throughout the history of sales and mergers. One project narrator began his career at ERA, and others were employed during the early years of the follow-up companies. Their information is helping add insight into the beginning and growth of the computer industry in Minnesota. Project narrators are:

- Lowell Benson – worked at the companies from 1960-1994 and then at the University of Minnesota until 2001
- Marilyn Chiat – her husband, Harvey, worked at Mechanical Division at General Mills when it was affiliated with Bendix and then at the companies from 1960 to 1997
- Sandra Hollenhorst – worked with start-up medical device industries
- David McCauley – employee of the companies in the early 1960s
- Curt Nelson – employee of ERA and the follow-up companies from 1952 to 1981
- John Rollwagen – CEO of Cray Research, Inc.
- Harvey Taipale – worked at the companies from 1966 to 2007
- Paul Wagschal – worked at the companies for several decades beginning in 1968
- Manuel “Manny” Villafaña – founder of medical technology companies in need of computer services from 1971 through the present time

- Jeffrey Yost – with the Charles Babbage Institute at the U of MN since 1998, its director since 2018; also a faculty member in the Program in the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine, U of MN, Mpls, since 2010 and a research professor since 2019.

When the project is completed in late November 2024, the interviews will be held in the RCHS collections.

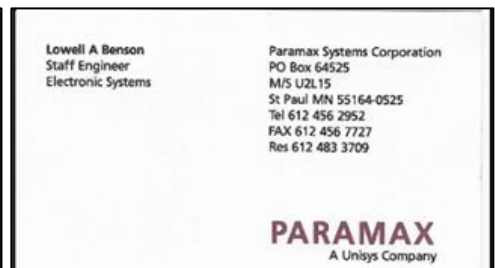
Barb Sommer and Carson Tomony

Paramax Tidbits

In November 1991, the defense industry part of Unisys was titled Paramax Electronic & Information Systems Group, then in December 1991 was set up as Paramax with the Twin Cities organization named Paramax Electronics Systems. Unisys then intended to spin off Paramax with an Initial Public Offering (IPO), reference <https://vipclubmn.org/lmcolegacy.html#Names>. Apparently, in 1992, Unisys management thought that they could get ~\$25 per share with an IPO. Wall Street pundits did some analysis and supposedly let Unisys management know that the best possible IPO was \$5 per share. So, the spin-off concept was discarded and in January 1994, Unisys Defense Systems was renamed as Unisys Government Systems Group, with the Eagan facility named Electronics Systems. Undaunted, in May 1995, Unisys Chairman Michael Blumenthal sold the Unisys defense business interests to Loral, with Eagan operations named Loral Defense Systems–Eagan.

To date, none of our Legacy Anthology stories have included any Paramax-specific stories. When cleaning files I found a two-sided business card (Russian and English; see below) that evoked memories of a 1993 series of events.

Because of the Khrushchev initiative of Glasnost (openness) and Perestroika (reconstruction), the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), commonly known as the Soviet Union, wanted to sell some of their technologies to the United States. We, Paramax Electronic Systems, were contacted to ascertain any interest in their Aluminum Circuit Technology (ACT) for ‘defense computers.’ A few government agencies were somewhat aware of this because of an ‘ACT box’ that was aboard a MIG-29 which had been defected to Japan. Tom Watson was assigned as an executive of interest to form and lead an investigative team. I’m sorry that I do not remember other team member names, other than Paul Roselle (process engineer). Tom and I and two



others flew to Moscow for two days of meetings with American Embassy and Soviet personnel. Then Tom and I rode a train to Minsk in Belarus to meet with staff of the Radio Technology Institute. We were joined by Paul Roselle and a manufacturing engineer. After three days of reviewing their ACT processes, we flew back to Moscow for a day then a long-long flight home.

The technology: They would shape a piece of aluminum sheet as the side(s) of an electronic box, then spray an insulating material layer on it. Then they would spray a millimeter thick layer of aluminum. They would adhere a mask with circuits and electronic device pads to the aluminum layer. Then an etching process would remove the aluminum not covered by the mask, leaving the circuit designs. After washing away the mask material, the sheet was ready for solder attachment of component parts. Thus, the sheet (board with electronics) was both the physical structure for mounting in the aircraft as well as the metal-to-metal cooling path.

A month later, three engineer/researchers from the Minsk institute visited St. Paul for more days of discussions. After they left, our ACT investigating team wrote a report to Paramax management with the recommendation that the technology would not enhance any of our airborne, spaceborne, nor shipboard products. A ‘thanks, but no thanks’ was sent back to Moscow and Minsk via the state department and embassy.

Afterthoughts: The Radio Technology Institute had tightly controlled access—surrounded by a double row of fencing and guard towers. The guards carried submachine guns, thus, showing our passports and special access papers was a bit intimidating. The trials and errors that the Minsk researchers revealed to us during their ACT developments had already been experienced by Sperry engineers as we developed hybrids and a chip for fiber-optic communications a decade earlier (see https://vipclubmn.org/Articles/SNERT_Development6.pdf).

LABenson

IN REMEMBRANCE OF:

The obits hereunder are redacted from funeral home postings or Pioneer Press, Star Tribune, or applicable local listings.

The VIP Club board extends its sympathies to the families and friends of those who have lost loved ones.

“Those we love don’t go away. They walk beside us every day. Unseen, unheard, but always near. Still loved, still missed, and very dear.”
 ~Alex MacLean, [Grave Situation](#)



Mark G. Butterworth – Age 65, of Lakeville, MN transferred to heaven August 22, 2024 after battling pancreatic cancer. Mark was a talented mechanical engineer who utilized both his design

capabilities and in-depth finite element analysis skills. He especially enjoyed tutoring/mentoring students in mathematics. He was an avid hiker, biker, kayaker, snow shoer, hobby photographer, and “armchair” geologist, most at rest listening to classical music, and reading deep theological studies, the history of mathematics, and all things related to natural science. Mark is survived by his wife, Darcey, two children, six grandchildren, and other family.

Jennifer “Jenny” Mary Del Fiacco – Age 82, of

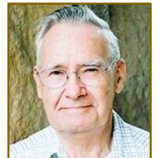


Eagan, MN passed away September 13, 2024. Jenny was employee Gerry Del Fiacco’s wife. Their married life began in St. Paul before Gerry’s work took them to Southern California. They and their small children also lived in Aachen, Germany, and later in their long-time West St. Paul home. Active in their Catholic faith, Jenny was a volunteer providing pastoral care for many years. She was also a wonderful cook and joyful planner of family gatherings. Jenny is survived by her husband, Gerald, 4 children, 12 grandchildren, 2 great-grandchildren, and many nieces, nephews, and more loving relatives and friends.

Paul R. Erickson – Age 67, of Prior Lake, MN passed away August 10, 2024. Paul majored in engineering at the U of MN, then worked at Sperry and Lasermaster as a mechanical engineer, and retired as a Sensata director. In his spare time, Paul worked on one of his great passions—his RV 7a airplane—and loved going to the Oshkosh airshow. Paul and his wife, Kaye, blended their lives and six children to raise together. Paul—wise, charming, and selfless—was his kids’ soccer coach, passed along his love for music and the outdoors, and never missed grandkids’ events. Paul is survived by his wife, Kaye, 6 children, 13 grandchildren, and other relatives and friends.



Oscar George Johnson – Age 94, of Richfield, MN passed away September 14, 2024, of natural causes. He proudly served in the United States Air Force, retired from Unisys, and loved to dance! Oscar is preceded in death by his wife of 43 years, Shirley, and is survived by three children, two grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.



Jack LaShomb – Passed away May 31, 2024 in Chapala, in the central Mexican state of Jalisco, where he and his wife of 36 years, Shelly, have been living the past few years. A coworker spoke of employees that knew, liked, and respected Jack, their proud Marine friend. Events were held for his burial in Minnesota and a gathering in Chapala, Mexico.

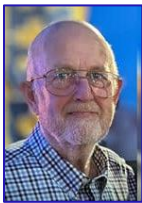
John “Jack” William Lavers – Age 91, passed away peacefully August 14, 2024 at home with his family present. Jack joined the Air Force at 17, serving in Korea and Germany. He eventually settled in St. Paul where he met his wife, Grace, and where they made many memories together, as well as in Florida, East Bethel, MN, and Woodbury. Jack worked for Unisys for over 30 years as a program director, troubleshooter, and computer parts developer for Trident submarines, working closely with the Navy. Jack enjoyed hunting, fishing, and building and creating things, like several houses, beautiful fireplaces at his home and church, swimming pools for the family, and a log cabin in retirement. Retirement was also filled with golf outings with friends in MN and in Gulf Shores, AL. He spoiled his children and loved sorting shells, giving out chocolate bars and advice, and playing cribbage with his grandchildren. Jack is survived by his wife of 59 years, Grace, two daughters, five grandchildren, and other relatives and friends.



Howard L. Meier – Age 100, a lifelong resident of Prescott, WI was welcomed home March 5, 2024. When World War II broke out, Howard enlisted in the Army Air Corps where he became a B-29 bombardier. Luckily, the war ended before he shipped off; he remained in the reserves and has been a proud member of the American Legion and VFW. When he returned home, Howard dated and married Alvera Schommer and a son was born four years later. Sadly, Alvera passed away at an early age of cancer. Years later, he met Arlene Wiskerchen while both were members of the church choir and they later married. Howard, a Life Member of the VIP Club, is remembered by coworkers as a well-liked fellow who worked in the CAD group. He was kind and shared his blessings with others as a volunteer firefighter, and a volunteer with Sharing and Caring Hands, their church, and at the nursing home. Howard’s burial was with full military honors, paying respect to his service in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II.



Keith LeRoy Miller – Age 80, passed away August 19, 2024 after a brief cancer battle. Keith graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from the University of Nebraska. He and his wife, Sherilyn Sue McMahon, married and moved to the Twin Cities where they had two daughters. Keith, a former VIP Club member, had an engineering career through Sperry, UNIVAC, and Unisys, retiring in 2006. He loved attending his grandchildren’s events, and spent countless hours hunting, fishing, and snowmobiling around the



country. Keith was preceded in death by his wife, Sheri, and is survived by two daughters and six grandchildren.

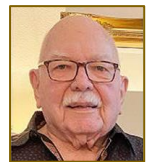
Kenneth Frank Morrison – Age 91, of Eagan, MN passed away September 19, 2024. Ken joined the Air Force after high school and served during the Korean war as a cryptographer monitoring Russian air traffic. Stationed in New Jersey, he met his wife, Johanna. They married, and after his Air Force service, returned to Wisconsin, then Minneapolis, and Eagan, where they were charter members of their church. Kenneth, a VIP Club member, worked for UNIVAC for 25 years, then for the Department of Veteran’s Affairs, and retired in 1997. He had many hobbies, including photography, belonging to the UNIVAC Camera Club. He loved music, playing coronet in high school and for church functions. Later he joined the church choir, Eagan Men’s Chorus, and recently the Dakota Valley Symphony and Chorus. He also played the guitar and performed country and soft rock with friends for senior centers, nursing homes, and others. He enjoyed cars and their history, loved to travel, and enjoyed visiting with family and friends. Kenneth was preceded in death by his wife, Johanna, and is survived by two children, a brother, and cousins.



Kenneth J. “Ken” Nelson – Age 84, of Little Falls, MN, formerly Bloomington, passed away September 19, 2024. Kenneth served in the U.S. Army, and received a bachelor’s degree in mathematics and a minor in French from the U of MN. Ken taught high school math for one year, and worked for Lockheed Martin for 36 years as a computer programmer. He and the love of his life, Judith “Judy” Johnson, married and made their home in Bloomington. Ken volunteered at the Minneapolis VA Hospital, and enjoyed golfing, fishing, volleyball, reading, shopping at Menards, camping with family, and downhill skiing in Montana and Colorado. He and Judy enjoyed trips to Hawaii and Mexico, and cheering for Minnesota sports teams. Ken was also a member of the VIP Club, golfing in various leagues. He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Judy, two children, four grandchildren, and many friends.



Donald Allen Rice – Age 92, of Spring Hill, FL, passed peacefully at home surrounded by loved ones September 10, 2024. Don enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served during the Korean War, then utilized his Navy skills working for Sperry Rand UNIVAC for 36 years; he is remembered as once working in the Bldg 2 Field/Client Support organization. Don devoted to his wife, Margaret “Marge” Eckert, nearly 31 years, loved playing golf, bowling, and was an avid Chicago Bears and Cubs fan.



He was a technology lover, liked to play the piano, listen to music, and was a crossword puzzle whiz. He was preceded in death by two stepchildren, and is survived by his wife, Marge, 4 children, 3 stepchildren, 17 grandchildren, and 6 great-grandchildren.

Paul Richardson – Age 93, passed away peacefully September 29, 2024 surrounded by family in his Bloomington, MN home. Paul served in the U.S. Air Force, retiring as a captain, and graduated with a mechanical engineering degree from the U of MN. He is remembered as a mechanical engineer in the Antenna Coupler department, a talented engineer with the Printware spinoff company ([Spinoffs, Chapter 6 \(vipclubmn.org\)](#)), and a Life Member of the VIP Club. Paul and his beloved wife, Shirley Bishop, raised five children. After Shirley's death, Paul met and had a commitment ceremony with Mary Nelson, and they were constant companions. He was a very involved and loving father, an accomplished design engineer, and devoted member of his church family. Paul was preceded in death by his wife, Shirley, and a daughter, and is survived by his 4 children, 12 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren and their families, as well as Mary Nelson and her family.



Richard G. "Dick" Roller – Age 92, passed away June 6, 2024 in Maplewood, MN. After serving in the Air Force, Dick completed his electrical engineering degree at the U of MN, spent the rest of his career at Sperry UNIVAC, and was a former VIP Club member. He was an active Boy Scouts leader, an avid fisherman, loved Twins baseball, and was skilled in woodworking, selling his creations at local gift shops. Dick and his wife of 70 years, Irene, attended their church for over 60 years where the fellowship and teaching was instrumental in their faith. Dick is survived by his wife, Irene, two children, five grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

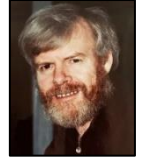


Rudolf "Rudy" A. Solomonson – Age 91, passed away July 30, 2024 surrounded by loved ones who will honor his legacy as a true gentleman by living their lives with his best qualities: unconditional acceptance, patience, kindness, and grateful hearts. Rudy was a jack of all trades: a pilot, singer, church accountant, knight in shining armor, and retired computer engineer, remembered as working in the Roseville Tech Support organization. One of the good guys, Rudy brought peace and stability to a widower with five children when he married his one true love, Patricia "Pat" Gable, changing their lives and becoming a second dad always there for them. Rudy loved his family, faith, a home-cooked meal, a cup of coffee, singing Swedish tunes, and sitting on his



rocker overlooking the lake. Rudy is preceded in death by his wife, Pat, two sons, and other family, and is survived by his 3 children, 6 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, 1 great-great-grandson, along with a sister and many nieces, nephews, and friends.

Brian Keith Toren – Age 89, passed away unexpectedly July 14, 2024, after a long and healthy life. Brian was a programmer/systems engineer at Sperry UNIVAC before following Earl Joseph's role as a futurist. Brian was passionate about the future and the growth of technology, and his experiences ran the gamut from a childhood on a farm ploughed with draft horses to programming for the Nike X anti-missile system, teaching marketing at Fissure and computer science courses at Metro State, and guiding the Minnesota Futurists for decades. In 2008, Brian presented on "Where We Go From Here" at a State Fair Computer technology symposium (see <https://www.vipclubmn.org/Articles/StateFair1.pdf>, page 37). He was ever-curious, nimble in mind and body. Brian was preceded in death by a son and other family, and is survived by his life partner of over 40 years, Virginia (Ginny) Kimmer, his three children, four grandchildren, and other family.



Robert "Bob" Pierce Wardin – Age 89, a resident of North Oaks, MN for 49 years, passed away August 12, 2024. Robert was a scientist, inventor, entrepreneur, and coach. He was a lifelong learner who earned a BS in physics and EE at Iowa State, a Master of mathematics and computer science at the University of Illinois, was a PhD candidate in control sciences at the U of MN, and graduated from the Carlson School of Management Executive Program. A coworker remembers Bob as a reliability consultant working for Grover Wulff, and at one time a VIP Club member. Bob worked on the Mercury, Gemini, Apollo, Sky Lab, and Space Shuttle programs. He founded Programs Inc. where they did contract engineering and high frequency electronic prototype development; they developed the first wireless Cardiac Telemetry Monitor for Medtronic. He and his wife, Jean, met at Iowa State Teachers College and married five months later; they were married one week short of 68 years. He had many interests that he enjoyed with his family and friends; he played tennis, skied, sailed, golfed, bowled, enjoyed the Opera and MN Symphony, and coached little league football. He also hunted ducks, geese, deer, doves, and pheasants. He loved to travel with his wife and family and share his experiences from visiting six different continents. Bob was preceded in death by his wife, Jean, and two grandchildren, and is survived by his 3 children, 11 grandchildren, and 6 great-grandchildren.





P. O. Box 21903
Eagan, MN 55121

VIP CLUB Newsletter

VIP Club MN P.O. 21903 Eagan, MN 55121
<http://vipclubmn.org/newsletters.html>

Board of Directors – 2024

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PERIODIC SOCIAL GROUPS

Monthly Breakfast Gathering

- **1st Thursday**, 8 a.m. – **Capitol View Cafe**, 637 Smith Ave., **St. Paul**

Monthly Lunch Gatherings

- **1st Tuesday**, 11:00 a.m. – **Casper's Cherokee of Eagan**, 4625 Nicols Rd. **Keith Behnke**: 651-587-2591.
- **2nd Tuesday**, 11:30 a.m. – **Mall of America** 3rd floor North Food Court between the elevator & Burger King. **Paul Wennerstrom**: 952-854-7855.

Quarterly Breakfast Gathering

- **2nd Wednesday**, 9 a.m. in Mar., June, Sept., & Dec. – Eagles Club, 563 Old Hwy 8 in **New Brighton**. **Paul Dickson**: 651-482-9934.

Temporarily Suspended

CLUB CONTACT DATA

VIP Club 2023 Activity Coordination:

CBI Liaison; Dick Lundgren, rflundgr@aol.com
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