



## Bruce Kern Nelson

November 13, 1915 - September 22, 2017

Bruce Kern Nelson, 101, formerly of Ypsilanti, Mi., passed away peacefully in his sleep at 3:30 am September 22nd 2017 at Jill's House Assisted Living Center in Bloomington, IN. Born November 13, 1915 to Margaret Kern and George Henry Nelson in Marquette, Michigan, he attended Graveraet Elementary School and graduated from Marquette High School in 1932. Bruce then enrolled at Northern Michigan University where he was the Editor of the school newspaper and President of the Senior Class. He graduated with a BA in education in 1936 and began his career in education as a science teacher. He completed his Master's Degree from the University of Michigan in 1944 just before his service in WW II. Bruce served as a Lieutenant in the Navy and was a Coding Officer in the Aleutian Islands. Honorably discharged in 1946, he became a High School Principal before returning to University of Michigan where he earned his Ph.D. in 1953. Bruce then began a long and distinguished career of services at Eastern Michigan University. He was the director of the EMU lab school and superintendent of Lincoln Schools. He quickly assumed the role of Vice President for Instruction and served in that capacity for 21 years. In tribute to his work and his devotion to the needs of the faculty, the EMU Faculty Development Center was renamed "The Bruce K Nelson Faculty Development Center" in 2005.

Bruce married Agnes "June" Johnson in 1939 and they had one daughter. June died in 1949 and Bruce married Frances Stakel the following year, a

union that produced three sons and another daughter. Bruce and Fran settled in Ypsilanti, MI where they resided for 52 years. Bruce was a devoted husband, father, brother, uncle, cousin, grandfather, great grandfather, community member and friend. He was a faithful Presbyterian enjoying church services even into his 101st year. In the 1960's and 70's, he served in various leadership capacities in the Presbyterian Church at the state and local level. His hobbies included swimming, genealogy, photography, sailing, exercise, and corresponding. He was especially fond of gatherings at the family cabins on Lake Superior and Walloon Lake. He loved a pastie picnic at Presque Isle, hiking Sugarloaf and telling stories around the campfire. He had a penchant for anything chocolate and was a dessert devotee! Bruce had distinctive, beautiful handwriting and was known for his warm, eloquent correspondence. All his life, he stayed connected to others through his writing. Bruce was the quintessential family patriarch. He was beloved and revered in his family who somehow believed and hoped he might live forever.

Bruce was preceded in death by his parents, wives June and Frances, three brothers George, Robert and Lee, daughter Jill Becker and great granddaughter Zola Becker, and dear companion Marie Peterman. He is survived by his sister Mary Peters, children, John Nelson (Jayne) of Rosemount, MN, Scott Nelson (Sarah) of Phoenix, AZ, David Nelson (Julie) of Bloomington, IN, and Nancy Nelson of Bloomington, IN, by fourteen grandchildren, fourteen great grandchildren and one on the way!

The family thanks the staff at Bell Trace, Autumn Hills, Better Day Club and Jill's house for their care of Bruce for the past ten years. A memorial service will be held Friday, October 13th 2017 at 11:30 at the First Presbyterian Church, 221 East Sixth Street in Bloomington, IN. Internment will follow in summer of 2018 at the Park Cemetery in Marquette, MI. Memorial contributions may be made to Jill's House Assisted Living Center, 751 East Tamarack Trail, Bloomington, IN 47408 or Better Day Club, P.O. Box 282

Ellettsville, IN 47429. Allen Funeral Home and Crematory, 4155 S. Old State Road 37, Bloomington, have been entrusted with arrangements. You are invited to share a memory or leave an online condolence to the family at [www.allencares.com](http://www.allencares.com)

# Tribute Wall

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“*Bruce and I were Bell Trace neighbors. Evidence of his dedication to his second wife was seeing her bed rolled onto a patio at the Health and Living Center with Bruce, sitting by the bed and holding a book while reading to her. And, he was always delighted when one of his grandsons joined him for dinner. He impacted many lives on his career path. Well done, faithful servant.*

*Harmon Baldwin  
Richmond, VA*

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**Harmon Baldwin** - October 08, 2017 at 04:27 PM