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The Park Record

Obituaries

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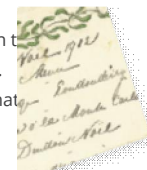
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WILLIAM WISHNICK

1925 - 2010 ▾ Obituary ▸ Condolences ▸ Gallery



William Wishnick was 85 years old when he peacefully passed from our presence on May 29, 2010. Bill was a business man, philanthropist, USA Off-Shore Powerboat Champion in 1970, and World Off-Shore Power Boat Champion in 1971, race car driver, motorcyclist, adventurer, lover of humanity, good humor, kindness, grace, honor, integrity and hard work. William Wishnick, retired CEO and Chairman of the Board of Witco Corp., was born in New York City in 1924. After overseas duty in the United States Army, he entered the University of Texas and graduated in 1949 with a B.BA. He joined Witco that year in the manufacturing department of the company's Pioneer products plant at Lawrenceville, Illinois. A year later, Mr. Wishnick was transferred to Perth Amboy, New Jersey, and placed in charge of Pioneer's manufacturing operations. In 1951, he was elected vice president and treasurer of the company, executive vice president in 1955, vice chairman of the board in 1960, chairman of the board on January 1, 1964, president on October 28, 1971, and CEO and Chairman of the Board in 1975. He held those positions until his retirement December 1991; 70 years after his father had begun the company as Wishnick-Tumpeer Chemical Company. Wishnick was one of the most dynamic and charismatic CEO's of his generation. He was highly respected in the business world as a tough executive with a special feeling for his staff and



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prided himself with the fact that he never in the history of the company had a strike by the employees. He grew up with Witco, knew everything about it and could reach decisions very quickly. When he made a decision, he wanted action and was not interested in elaborate staff procedures. Witco was transformed from a \$20M chemical reseller in 1954 into a \$123 million diversified manufacturer 10 years later. Bill, the company's second chairman, launched a series of acquisitions and internal expansions that brought sales to \$1.5 billion in 1984. He served on the Board of the Chemical Manufacturers Association; member of the American Chemical Society; New York Paint, Varnish and Lacquer Association; the Salesman's Association of the American Chemical Industry; and the American Petroleum Institute; Member of the Board of Trustees of The Mount Sinai Medical Center, New York City, Sponsor and Trustee of The Mount Sinai School of Medicine; Fellow and Honorary Doctor of Engineering of Polytechnic, Trustee of Carnegie Mellon, and President of The Robert I Wishnick Foundation.

BILL WISHNICK

T H E M A N , T H E M Y T H , T H E L E G E N D

In 1965 on an impulse, Bill turned his energy toward Ocean Power Boat racing. He was in Florida for New Year's, read about a boat race and decided to take a look. He bought the boat that won the race and began racing. Five years later, he captured the American Power Boat Association Championship, followed by the World Championship in 1971. He raced all over the world, from Europe to the Caribbean and in South America. Amongst his other interests of motorcycle riding, car racing, he loved helping others to achieve their dreams. Besides putting his own children through college, he put the two daughters of friends Mabel & John Lam and the son of Joe

Maffie through college as well.
 Bill was an extremely charitable person and served on many boards. He was proudest of the over 40 years he served as Trustee of Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City and was very active for many years in sponsoring and fund raising for Jewish causes and for the State of Israel, as well as American Friends of the Hebrew University where his mother Freda Wishnick had a dormitory built. Many years later when her great-grandson Max Leeds joined the Israeli Army, he got to sleep in the Freda Wishnick Building. This barely begins to describe the marvelous man that Bill Wishnick was, nor does it begin to describe the length of his passions and his loves. His family meant everything to him. It is with love that he departed his wife, Lisa Fluet Wishnick, his precious daughters Ami Jo Gibson, Gina Grossman and Kendall Wishnick Adams; he leaves two son-in-laws Ron Gibson and Matt Adams. He adored and enjoyed the company of his grandchildren Emmett and Oscar Adams, Jenna and Max Leeds, Zack and Zoey Grossman and many, many friends. His brother John Wishnick and his wife Phyllis and seven nieces and nephews survive him. Bill joins the company of his dearly departed daughter Elizabeth, his parents Robert I. Wishnick and Freda (Frankel) Wishnick and, most recently, his beloved sister Betty Freeman of Los Angeles.
 Rest in peace dearest husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, friend and greatest mentor and supporter of so, so many...you will be sorely missed.

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-

"I miss you, Grandpa Bill. Jut read the oral history of..."

-Max Leeds

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