Ross Eugene Thoresen

January 13, 1915 ~ June 13, 2015

After 100 years of a great life well lived, Ross Eugene Thoresen , lawyer, statesman, community leader, and loving family man passed peacefully from this life on the evening of June 13, 2015. He was born in Salt Lake City, Utah on January 13, 1915, to I. Eugene Thoresen and Irene Nash Parkinson. He graduated from South High School and the University of Utah.

He served as a missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in the Southern States Mission from 1934 to 1936. He continued his service to his church many callings including Seminary Teacher and President of the Stake Young Men.

Ross served as a 1st Lieutenant in the Legal Division of Ordinance Department of the U.S. Army from 1942 , 1946, where he developed a system in termination of war contracts with manufacturing firms that made the process move more quickly and efficiently.

After military service during World War II he returned to receive his law degree from the University of Utah School of Law in 1947. He was admitted to the Utah State Bar May 31, 1949.

He joined the Industrial Relations Council of Utah in 1947 becoming the manager in 1952. He remained at the head of the council until his retirement in 1988, where his motto was "Labor relations should be thought out not fought out." The Council was a non-profit organization of the state's business leaders formed to bring specialized labor relations services within the reach of every business. He served more than 500 different employers in Utah and Southern Idaho as well as others across the nation. He traveled more than 50,000 miles a year serving these companies. Each week he wrote a newsletter entitled "Facts and Opinions" which was distributed to more than 3,000 managers throughout the United States.

In 1951 he was elected to the Utah State House of Representatives. His concern with how labor negotiations were handled and a request from Filmmaker Cecille B. DeMilll pushed him to be the author and chief sponsor of the Utah Right to Work Law. It wasn't until the 1954 session when he was Majority Whip that the law was passed. "Ross, never got into the habit of being satisfied with nearly succeeding; learn to get your satisfaction only out of really succeeding." was the sage advice given to him by Mr. DeMille, and it became his life-long motivation.

Ross served his community in many capacities. He was senior Vice President of the Utah Symphony Board in the 1980's. He was elected Vice Chairman of the Industrial Relations Group of the National Industrial Council where he directed activity of 130 associations, representing employers nationwide. He also served on the Board of Directors for Salt Lake Community College. He was a National Board member of Service Merchandisers of America. Among his awards, he was very proud of the First Lifetime Achievement Award given to him by the Utah Manufacturers Association. He was an active member of the International Rotary Club. He was affiliated with the Nationwide Blue

Ribbon Committee of Lawyers for Labor Law Reform.

His days as one of the most eligible bachelors in Salt Lake City came to an end when he met and married the love of his life, DarLeen Pierce Nielson on May 12, 1962. He became an instant family man, with daughters Sue and Jean. His greatest reward in life was his four grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

He is survived by his wife DarLeen, daughters, Sue (John) Ahrendes, and Jean (Steven) Brown. His grandchildren, Megan (Tom) Holt, Ross Ahrendes, Spencer (Cate) Brown and Erin Brown; and a network of people who considered him family.

He was proceeded in death by his parents, a brother and two sisters.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, June 20, 2015 at 12:00 Noon in the Monument Park 17th Ward Chapel (2795 East Crestview Drive, Salt Lake City, Utah). A viewing will be held prior to services from 10:30 to 11:45 AM. Interment will be in the Larkin Sunset Lawn Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations to the Perpetual Education Fund for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.