



Leonard Velanders

Leonard (birth name Gösta Rune Lennart) Velanders was born August 24, 1920 to Fritz and Sara Velanders in Laxå, Sweden. Len first came to the United States in 1923. The family returned to Sweden around 1932, and immigrated to the US permanently in 1936. Len attended elementary schools in both the US and Sweden and High School in Milwaukee, WI. He earned his undergraduate degree in Engineering from the University of Wisconsin, Madison and a Masters Degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Minnesota. He enlisted and served in the US Navy from 1944 - 1946. When he left the Navy he was Commander of the USS YMS 46 - a minesweeper that had been deployed in New Guinea, Borneo and the China Sea including Korea. Leonard married Violet (Larson) on August 24, 1946 in Parker's Prairie, Minnesota. They lived in Racine, Wisconsin; Akron, Ohio; Elmhurst, Lombard, and Decatur, Illinois; before returning to Minnesota and settling in Brooklyn Center to raise their family. Len and Vi retired together to Alexandria, Minnesota in 1998. Violet died on March 7, 2011. Leonard spent his career as a Mechanical Engineer. He worked at Curtiss Wright Propeller Corp. prior to military service. After leaving the Navy he worked at Goodyear Aircraft, then as Chief Engineer of Nuclear Products Division at Borg Warner Corporation, Franklin Manufacturing, Litton Industries, and finally in his own business Applied Sales Engineering. Len was an avid tinkerer and had more than one invention to his name. He enjoyed the outdoors immensely and often commented how happy he was to have spent most of his life in Minnesota.

where activities like camping, hiking, canoeing, and fishing abound. Len and Vi had four children: Paul (died of leukemia at age 5 in 1955), Ann (Kurt) Nordby, Peter (Magda) Velandar, and Karen (Craig) Kochsiek. Len is also survived by grandchildren Benjamin, Matthew, Sarah, Petra, and Isaac, great grandchildren Cora, Owen and Alma, and several nieces and nephews. Other relatives from his family of origin all reside in Sweden. A lifelong Lutheran, Len was a member of Bethesda Lutheran Church in Alexandria, Minnesota at the time of his death. He and Vi enjoyed lifelong friendships with many members of Bethany Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Leonard had strong beliefs and resilient character. He lived by his principles every day. He was not perfect, and he knew that, but always met each new day ready to learn and do better. He hoped that he would be remembered more for his character than for his accomplishments. Many remember him as a loyal friend, willing volunteer, and a quietly compassionate supporter. His family remembers him as an excellent provider, great role model, lifelong learner, and someone for whom ? good enough? was never good enough. His children watched with awe as he became a devoted, tender caretaker for mom in the final years of her life. And he was determined to live until he died.