

## George C. Kolodziej

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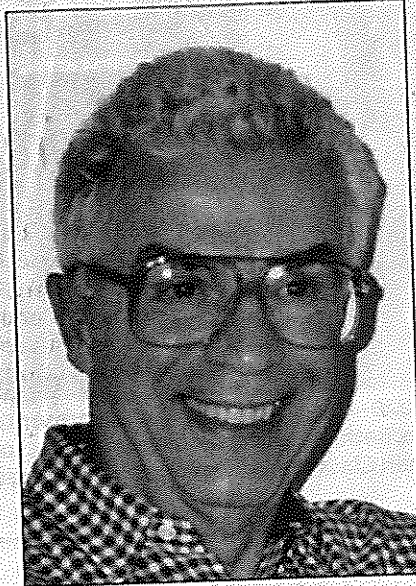
George C. Kolodziej, 91, of Grinnell and formerly of Oak Park, Ill., died Dec. 17, 2016 at the Mayflower Community Health Care Center in Grinnell. A celebration of George's life is

pending at the Mayflower Community in early January of 2017.

Further information on Mr. Kolodziej may be viewed on the Smith Funeral Home website at [smithfh@iowatele.com.net](mailto:smithfh@iowatele.com.net).

12-19-2016

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Memorial contributions may be directed to the ACLU, Alzheimer's Association and the Mayflower Human Needs Fund.

George was born February 22, 1925, in Chicago, the son of Joseph and Frances Ciesla Kolodziej. He was raised in Chicago and attended public school there. He was a veteran of the United States Navy and served during World War II.

The GI Bill gave him the opportunity to pursue a Mechanical Engineering Degree from the University of Illinois at Champaign/Urbana. He worked in research and development at a number of firms until he retired in 1989 from American National Can Company. He was very comfortable at his drawing board. George planned and created many innovations in their 43 years in their Oak Park two flat.

He was united in marriage with Velna Lewis on July 27, 1968, in Arlington Heights, Illinois. The couple moved to Oak Park in 1971 and later moved to Grinnell in 2014.

George was mechanically minded, a wonderful carpenter and a good craftsman. He was very precise in his thinking and work and his designs were elegant. He was fascinated with the history of Chicago and architecturally designed buildings. He enjoyed traveling frequently to Europe and held a passion for downhill skiing.

Survivors include his wife, Velna of Grinnell; four children, Gary (Cecilia Knight) Mertens of Grinnell, Paul (Cynthia Von Orth) Von Mertens of Chicago, Matthew Kolodziej of New York and David (Andi Anderson) Kolodziej of Chicago; and seven grandchildren, Rita, Jane and Ellis Mertens, Avalon Von Mertens and George, Molly and Sophie Kolodziej. He was preceded in death by his parents, Joseph and Frances Kolodziej; and five siblings, Charles Kolodziej, Florence Zukowski, Edwin Kolodziej, Matilda Kielbasa and twin sister, Lorraine Arnold.

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