



Burnham E. Neal

May 15, 2022 - April 12, 2012

Burnham E. Neal, age 89, of Mattoon, Illinois died early Thursday, April 12, 2012, in his home.

Burnham was born on May 15th, 1922, the son of Edgar Allen and Lora Ann Neal of Toledo, Illinois. He married Nancy J. Lunsford on June 22nd, 1966. She preceded him in death in 2006. He is survived by his daughter, Melissa Hope Neal-Lunsford of Charleston, Illinois and two grandsons; Sean Burnham Neal-Lunsford and David Reaves Neal-Lunsford of Mattoon, Illinois.

Beginning with a small gas station, Burnham built his business, Neal Tire, into a chain of tire stores located in three states, as well as BEN Tire, a wholesale tire and auto parts distribution company. As his business and income grew, he dedicated himself to philanthropic activities. He helped found Lake Land College in Mattoon in 1966 and funded a number of scholarships. A building at the college was renamed Neal Hall in honor of Burnham and his wife Nancy in 2005.

In 1997, Eastern Illinois University named the Philanthropy Awards after Burnham and his wife in recognition of their service to the university. Burnham, his wife, and his sister Rosemary Neal also endowed the Neal Welcome Center for Eastern Illinois University in 2002. Burnham received an honorary Doctor of Public Service from EIU in 2003.

His generosity is well known in central Illinois, including playing a major role in building the new YMCA in Mattoon, Illinois and establishing the Neal Nursing Institute at Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center. He received numerous awards for his philanthropy, receiving the Tire Business magazine's 2008 Tire Dealer

Humanitarian Award and the 2008 East Central Illinois Association for Fundraising Professionals' Philanthropist of the Year Award.\r\n\r\nBurnham was also active in local business affairs. He was a member of the Mattoon Chamber of Commerce and served terms on the board of directors of the Central National Bank of Mattoon and the First Neighborhood Bank of Toledo.\r\n\r\nBurnham loved sports and rooted for the Chicago Cubs, Chicago Bears, and the University of Illinois basketball and football teams. He was an avid golfer and a longtime member of the Mattoon Golf and Country Club, where he served a term as its president. Burnham and Nancy were also highly accomplished bridge players who achieved Grand Master status. He and his wife loved to travel, both in the United States and abroad.\r\n

Tribute Wall



“ *Burnham E. Neal*

October 08, 2023 at 07:40 PM



“ *My deepest sympathy to the family*

Pat Stuart and family - April 21, 2012 at 05:36 PM



“ *enjoyed many years with Burnham Neal, worked in several location stores, went on many outings and meetings in the past, he will not be forgotten to me. sorry for the loss, he was a wonderful man to look up to.*

Ron Jennings - April 21, 2012 at 03:10 AM



“ *My thoughts and prayers to Neal Family, God Bless each of you during this time.*

Mary Burnham Boyd - April 19, 2012 at 02:16 AM



“ *Burnham was a gentleman and I shall always remember him from my days in Toledo. he always treated me with respect and dignity. May God rest his soul.*

John L. Carlen - April 17, 2012 at 06:51 PM

DS

“ I very much enjoyed getting to know Neal when we served together on the EIU Foundation Board. He was a wonderful person and we will miss him. \r\nYou are all in our prayers.--Dennis

Dennis and Linda Spice - April 17, 2012 at 02:17 PM

JN

“ I am so sorry for your loss. Burnham was a wonderful, generous person that my family was privileged to know. His friendship meant so much to my Dad, Gene Nichols. Please know the entire family is in my thoughts and prayers.

Julie Nichols - April 17, 2012 at 01:50 PM

JE

“ My deepest and sincerest condolences to Burnham's family and to the Ben Tire/Neal Tire family of which I was so proud to be a part of.

Jenny Ellexson - April 17, 2012 at 01:39 PM

LJ

“ Sincere condolences from the T.V.Janes family in remembrance of their relationship and the good times they had together - be it in Florida or Mattoon. He was always ready to help people in need and speaking for the Janes family, he was a true model for all people of good will.\r\nSincerely, Larry Janes

Larry Janes - April 17, 2012 at 01:09 PM

MB

“ I am so sorry for your loss. Burnham will missed by all.

Mike & Amie Brodie - April 16, 2012 at 08:57 PM

LB

“ *Sorry about the loss of Burnham. We always had a great time with him and Nancy on our BEN Tire trips. I'll always remember him sitting in the gazebo in the Dominican Republic having a drink and smoking his cigar.*

Larry Barry - April 16, 2012 at 07:22 PM

CF

“ *We would like to express our sincere condolences on the unfortunate and untimely death of Burnham. His passing came as quite a shock and a huge loss. You have our deepest sympathy.\r\nI witnessed first hand what a great man he was and I was so fortunate to have known him so well.\r\nPlease know this grief is felt by all!\r\nGod Bless!\r\nCR Neff and Family*

CR Neff & Family - April 16, 2012 at 04:22 PM