



Olaf Paasche

October 7, 1911 - January 3, 2008

Olaf G. Paasche, retired professor of Mechanical and Metallurgical Engineering at Oregon State University, died on January 3, 2008 at the age of 96 years.

Professor Paasche was born October 7, 1911 in Tacoma, Washington to Olaf G. Paasche Sr., a watch maker recently from Norway, and Clara Alfsen Paasche from Wisconsin. The family moved first to Idaho to try farming and then to Chicago, Illinois when frontier life proved difficult. Olaf Sr. died in 1924 leaving the young family in a tough position. After high school, Olaf attended several colleges at night while working days and finally received his BS Degree in Metallurgical Engineering from the University of Illinois in 1943. Upon graduating, he entered the Army and served with the 315th infantry, 79th division in Europe. He served as a Staff Sergeant in charge of a twelve man rifle squad thru two major campaigns and was awarded the Bronze Star. He became associated with Oregon State University in 1946 when he was recruited as an assistant professor by Sam Graf, after whom Graf Hall on OSU campus was named. He was made full professor in 1957. During this time he also was associated with the Bureau of Mines in Albany, Oregon, on a part time basis--an association which lasted until his retirement. Summer breaks from teaching at OSU were spent doing research at Purdue University in Iowa, Northwestern University in Illinois and Iowa State in Iowa. Sabbatical research breaks took Olaf and his family to Illinois, where he earned a Master of Science degree in metallurgical engineering from the Illinois Institute of

Technology in 1955, and to Norway, where he was a guest professor at NTH University in Trondheim, Norway. He retired from OSU in 1976.

Olaf made many contributions to the science of metals and was active in such professional societies as the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical and Petroleum Engineers and the American Society for Metals (now ASM International). For these services, he was made a Fellow in ASM and was given the Distinguished Merit Award by his Alma Mater, the University of Illinois.

In 1948 he married Bette Marie Johnson in Chicago, Illinois. She died in 1980. After joining a Widow and Widowers club, he met and married Catherine Christine Beavin in 1982. Catherine died in 1995 after 13 happy years. Clara McCormick caught Olaf's eye while dancing and they were married in 1999. Olaf traveled widely and was an avid dancer and was often seen out and about with Clara in recent years. Olaf volunteered with the Meals on Wheels program in Corvallis, and was an active member of Kiwanis club of Corvallis and the Sons of Norway lodge in Salem.

He is survived by his wife Clara, two sons Eric Charles of Union City, California and Carl Edward of Portland and a daughter Jean Marie Braaten of Corvallis, six grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at 3:00 pm on Sunday, January 20, 2008 at Grace Lutheran Church in Corvallis, where he had been a member. Memorials may be made to the Olaf G. Paasche fund at the Oregon State University foundation or to the Grace Lutheran Church Foundation in care of McHenry Funeral Home 206 NW 5th St., Corvallis, OR 97330.

From walking behind a horse and plow as a boy to helping develop materials and techniques that aided the USA space program and Bonneville Power Administration high power transmission lines, Olaf G. Paasche enjoyed a long and eventful life, witnessed many changes at home and around the world, and was a much loved husband, father and friend.

Tribute Wall



“ *A good man, lived a long and good life. We should all hope to do as well and affect others as well as Olaf did.* ”

Steve Price - January 15, 2008 at 02:48 AM