



## Gerald L. Larson, 81

**HARLAN** - Gerald LeRoy Larson, son of Edgar E. and Blanche (DeBord) Larson, was born near Kirkman on June 24, 1906. He died at Myrtue Memorial Hospital in Harlan, on April 29, 1988 at age 81 years, 10 months and five days. He attended Harlan High School and graduated with the class of 1924. He then worked at McPheeter's Drug Store for two years before entering Iowa State College with the intention of studying Electrical Engineering. He changed his mind and transferred to the University of Nebraska, from which he graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration. After graduation, he worked for a year in the accounting department of General Electric before returning to Harlan to go into business with his father.

On July 15, 1931, he married Eleanor Patterson. Three sons were born to this union. In 1932, he entered politics and became county clerk. He later served as county chairman of the Democratic party. In 1935, he became secretary of the Harlan Federal Savings and Loan Association and in 1965, became executive vice-president. In 1938, he passed the bar examination and became an attorney. On March 14, 1944, he entered the U.S. Navy and served his country in the South Pacific during WW II. He received an honorable discharge on Nov. 7, 1945, and returned to Harlan.

He served as a member of the Harlan School board from 1949-1952, was a permanent member of the Veteran's Building Commission and was also instrumental in the development of the Cresthaven Addition in the 1950's. He played an important part in the planning and building of the Danish Baptist Memorial Home and served for a number of years on its operations committee. He was active in Kiwanis and held many offices including

president of the Harlan Club and president of the Sixth Division of the Iowa Nebraska Kiwanis Club.

He was named Harlan's "Man of the Year" in 1954. In 1966-1967, he was elected president of the Iowa Savings and Loan League. In 1969, the official ribbon cutting ceremony was held for the new offices of Larson and Larson, Attorneys. They have traveled extensively worldwide throughout the years.

He was baptized in the old First Baptist Church, which formerly stood at the corner of 7th & Durant in Harlan. This church merged with the Danish Baptist Church to form Bethel Baptist Church in 1929 and he was a Sunday school teacher and church leader there for many years. In 1958, the present First Baptist Church was established and he was a charter member who through the years exemplified integrity, wisdom, a gracious spirit and faithfulness to Christ in this local church and among American Baptists regionally and nationally. He was church moderator and general chairman of Dedication Days in 1960, when the newly constructed First Baptist Church building was occupied, he was general chairman of the local arrangements committee, which hosted the Iowa Baptist convention in Harlan in 1964. He was elected president of the Iowa Baptist convention in 1965. He was elected to the general board of American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. in 1979 and served with distinction there and also on the board of International Ministries of ABCUSA. In 1976, he was honored by the KYB Sunday School class for his 45 years of service as their teacher (since 1931).

He was preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his wife, Eleanor of Harlan; three sons, Dr. Craig Larson, Solvang, CA; Justice Jerry Larson, Harlan and Dr. Douglas Larson, Storm Lake; eight grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; two sisters, Alice (Mrs Ken) Allen, Sun City West, AZ and Margaret "Peg" Runyon, Des Moines; nieces and nephews and other relatives.

Funeral services were May 2, 1988 at First Baptist Church, Harlan, with Pastor John M. Leggett officiating, assisted by Rev. John H. Ashley and Rev. David Mallgren. Burial was in Harlan cemetery with Paul A. Pauley, Fred Louis, Jr., Robert W. Hall, Michael P. Childs, Harold Kleinpaste, Glenn F. Thummel and Charles M. Early, D.V.M., serving as honorary casket bearers. Serving as casket bearers was Bob Bergdahl, Scott Larson, David Larson, Robert Larson, Rick Petersen and Jeffrey Larson. Pauley Funeral Home were in charge of arrangements.