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Paul J. Brancheau: Exec put his heart into Cadillac

July 19, 2007

BY NAOMI R. PATTON
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

Paul J. Brancheau, a longtime Cadillac executive, taught his children to live gracefully.

His family said he died peacefully Sunday after a long illness. He was 84.

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Born in Detroit on March 9, 1923, Mr. Brancheau lived in Farmington Hills. He served as an aviation cadet in the U.S. Navy before marrying his wife, Jean, in 1948. He earned a degree in aeronautical engineering from the University of Detroit.

Mr. Brancheau joined the Cadillac Motor Car division of General Motors in 1949. He began as a final assembly inspector before working as a general supervisor, master mechanic, plant engineer and finally, superintendent of manufacturing for Cadillac's Clark Street assembly plant.

"He loved the Cadillac," said his son, Jon Brancheau.

A media executive with GM, Jon Brancheau said he and his father always talked Cadillac or GM business. His father retired from Cadillac in 1984.

The elder Mr. Brancheau was also an accomplished artist who enjoyed painting and carving wood and stone sculptures. He also volunteered for the Catholic Church.

Daughter Polly Basile said he was "the most kind, compassionate, understanding man we were privileged to know."

In addition to his wife, son and daughter, he is survived by his children Jim, Bill, Deni and Robert; 12 grandchildren, and a sister.

A memorial gathering will be held at 6 tonight followed by a rosary at 8 p.m. at Harris Funeral Home, 15451 Farmington Road, Livonia. Services will begin at 10:30 a.m. Friday, followed by mass at 11 a.m. at St. Gerald Catholic Church, 21300 Farmington Road, Farmington. Memorial contributions can be sent to Capuchin Ministries, 1820 Mt. Elliott St., Detroit 48207.

Contact **NAOMI R. PATTON** at 313-223-4485.

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