

RAY PANTEL
HISTORICAL DESCRIPTIONS & INFORMATION

Born: 1925 in Texas

Died: Oct. 9, 1986

Daughter Gail (Pantel) Macmillan

Via e-mail 9/9/15 re. Ray Pantel Award:

Yes he was my wonderful Dad and I am so pleased that this award continues. He has been with the Lord so long now but is still terribly missed. He was the son of second generation German immigrants who settled in Victoria Texas. At one time he considered the seminary and started college but signed up for the Navy when WWII was declared and served in Guam. He came home to complete a college degree from University of Texas and met and married my mother Virginia, the love of his life. At the one year birthday of my older brother Stan, he was rushed to Houston as a victim of bulbar polio. He recovered from this and I am told I was the celebration :). This did leave its mark and caused breathing issues but I never knew that really until he died. It was also the cause of his early death at 62.

He had three kids-Stan, me and my younger brother Mark. He worked many years for the Victoria County Electric Co-op and ranched part time. I remember that when bad weather came (like Hurricane Carla) he had to go out and climb poles.

Somehow Texas A&M got to know him and we moved to College Station Texas where he worked with the Municipal Electrical Training program where he traveled all over Texas to help teach safety to linemen. He worked most of his career there with the exception of one adventure where the family moved to Houston for a year.

He loved his job and loved Texas history and all the small towns he worked with. He was a graduate of University of Texas but became a die-hard Aggie eventually. He was a voracious reader and I shared that with him. If you read the same book he did, he would remember all the characters and ask what you thought about them and the plot.

I know that he was very well respected in the field but of course I mostly knew him as my loving Dad who was a great example to us all.

I know that he taught classes all over Texas and spoke at national conventions. One of my early, early memories was him practicing "principals of electricity" classes out in the garage with me and my brothers being his students. He also taught safety classes and got a kick out of having recessive [CPR] Annie in his

front seat of the car and doing silly things.

This is probably way, way more than you wanted. This brings back a flood of memories of good times.

Bless you all and take care.

Gail

Son Stan Pantel

Via e-mail 9/13/15 re. Ray Pantel Award:

It is nice to hear that you are being given the award in my Father's name. He was a special person and loving father. It also says a lot about you that you want to know more about him and the kind of man he was.

I cannot add a lot to what my brother and sister have expressed but I did know he loved what he did in setting up safety programs across the co-op of Texas. He often mentioned being deeply affected by the electrocution of a man who worked at the Victoria, Texas Rural Electric Co-op when he was a young man. I know longer remember any details about this man and his death but I know Dad never forgot. I know it motivated him to work hard to prevent such a terrible tragedy wherever he had an influence.

He often told me if he could do something to prevent even one death it was worth all the time and effort it took to reach the men and women who worked in co-ops across Texas.

I can safely say if you had met him you would have been struck by his smile, humility and firm hand shake.

I'm almost 65 years old and a day does not go by that I don't think of him and hope that I measure up to be half the man he was and have the impact he had on so many folks.

Stan

Son Mark Pantel

Via e-mail 9/14/15 re. Ray Pantel Award:

My Dad had two families. His immediate family and his electric coop family that he interacted with on the road. He really forged closeness with a good many people in his work and travels and looked forward to seeing them in his work duties.

I had the opportunity to travel with him on a few trips and I remember getting up at 5:00 a.m. to jog before he went to work at the cooperative he was visiting. I could tell at a young age that he was proud of what he was doing and making a real difference. I realized later on how much he was respected by his cooperative family. I'm very proud that he made such a difference in his profession.

As Bob Cavendar, Manager of the Grayson- Collin Electric Cooperative said in a letter to my mother after his passing *"I don't believe I've ever known anyone who was so loved and respected by all who know him in the Cooperative program. It was a privilege to know him and work with Ray, whose place in the JT&S program can never be fully taken by anyone else"*

Mark Pantel