NELSON, DR. EUGENE

PJ - B

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1988

Funeral today in Providence for Dr. Eugene M. Nelson

NORTH KINGSTOWN — A funeral service was to be held today at noon for Dr. Eugene M. Nelson, 66, a long-time Providence orthodonist who was killed at his summer home in Saunderstown Wednesday in a lawn tractor accident that left him pinned in a foot of water.

Police said that as Dr. Nelson was trying to free his tractor from the edge of an embankment where it became stuck about 4:50 p.m., he and the tractor tumbled into a pond.

After being alerted to the accident by Dr. Nelson's 9-year-old grandson, fire rescue workers extricated him from the pond and took him to South County Hospital where he was pronounced dead.

The state medical examiner's office is investigating the accident.

Dr. Nelson, of 311 Freeman Parkway, Providence, and Gilbert Stuart Road, Saunderstown, was the husband of Jane (Sapinsley) Nelson.

Born in Providence, he was a son of the late Boris and Minnie (Rachevsky) Nelson.

Dr. Nelson was a well-respected figure in the state whose interests extended well beyond his work in orthodontics.

He was a past president of the Rhode Island Dental Association, and was a leader in forming the first clinic team at Rhode Island Hospital for the treatment of patients with cleft palates.

He was, for many years, chairman of the board of governors of Gordon School, and headed the building committee that planned and directed the school moving from Providence to East Providence in 1963. In June, he was master of ceremonies for the school's celebration of the 25th anniversary of the move.

A tennis enthusiast, he was credited with pioneering indoor tennis in Rhode Island, building an indoor court complex in East Providence.

Dr. Nelson took a strong interest in such issues as peace and conservation and was a member of the Narrow River Preservation Society, Save the Bay and the Audubon Society.

Dorothy Hall, headmistress at Gordon School, yesterday described Dr. Nelson as an honest, committed man who "always gave us good advice."

"Gene was the kind of person we felt was immortal," she said. "I believe his death has brought shock waves not only for us here at the school, but all around the state."

Former state Senate Minority Leader Lila M. Sapinsley, a sister-in-law, said Dr. Nelson was always seen as a "warm person," adored by the children and patients with whom he worked, and by his colleagues.

Dr. Nelson graduated from the former Rhode Island State College, now the University of Rhode Island, in 1943, and received his dental degrees from the University of Maryland and Tufts University Dental School.

He was a former chairman of the religious school board of Temple Beth-El, Providence, a past board member of the Jewish Community Center, and a past president of the University of Maryland Alumni Association.

Dr. Nelson served on the staffs of Rhode Island and Miriam Hospitals, on the faculty of Tufts School of Dental Medicine, the Boston University School of Medicine, the URI School of Dental Hygiene and the Harvard University School of Medicine.

During World War II he was a captain in the Army Dental Corps.

Besides his wife he leaves a daughter, Pamela Erskine of Providence; two sons, Barry Nelson of Philadelphia and Jonathan Nelson of Providence; a brother, Howard Nelson of Cranston, and four grandchildren.

The service was to be held at Temple Beth-El, Orchard Avenue.

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OUT OF RESPECT TO THE MEMORY OF
DR. EUGENE M. NELSON
TENNIS, RHODE ISLAND
East Providence and West Bay
Will Be Closed All Day
Friday, September 9, 1988

EB 9-8-88

NELSON, Dr. Eugene

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Nelson

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The funeral service will be tomorrow at noon at Temple Beth-El, Orchard Avenues.