



FRED “TED” GIBSON, JR. (Class OF 1945)

Ted was a 1945 graduate of Las Vegas High School and was student body president. Ted was born May 24, 1927, in Golden, Colorado. He was named after his father, Fred D. Gibson Sr. Along with his mother, May, and brother, Jim, the family moved to Mexico. In 1928, they moved to McGill, Nevada, followed by Carson City and finally settled in Las Vegas in 1936. There were four children and three more were born in Las Vegas. The family has been a part of the community since. He served in the U.S. Army and was married in 1948 to Mary Gallagher in Chicago. Together, they had two children, Fred III (Pete) and Maisie.

Ted was a 1951 engineering graduate of UNR and also attended Colorado College in Colorado Springs. He first worked for Titanium Metals, Timet, in Henderson, and then joined his father at Wecco, later American Potash. With his father, he helped found Pacific Engineering (Pepcon) in December 1955. Much of the growth of the company was based on Ted's patent which related to the composition of the electrode used in making perchlorate chemicals. Ammonium perchlorate was fundamental to the evolution of solid rocket fuels, first used in Jato units then in the Polaris submarine launched missile and later the Minuteman and Space Shuttle as well as several others used in defense of America. Ted became CEO in the 60's and led the company until his retirement in 1997. The company name was changed with the merger with American Pacific Corp. (AMPAC) in 1982. Due to the fire and explosions of May 4, 1988, the plant was moved to Cedar City, Utah. The incident is reviewed in "A Brief History: Pacific Engineering and Production Company of Nevada (Pepcon) Henderson, Nevada, 1955-1992" published in 2016 and authored by John Gibson and Dave Thayer. His biography, "It IS Rocket Science," authored by Jack Sheehan, was published in 2017.

Fred Sr., Fred Jr. and Jim Gibson were fundamental in the development and growth of Henderson. Ted was active in many community and government organizations too numerous to list. Among them were the Nevada Development Authority, NDA, the Nevada Taxpayers Association, NTA, NASA, the Mining Commission, DRI, the Nature Conservancy, NPRI, American Red Cross and United Way. He served on the boards of

Nevada Power and Cashman Equipment. He received several awards for his service. His contributions included UNR, UNLV, NSC, SUU (Utah) and a Chair at Georgia Tech University. He was a lifelong Republican and a Master Mason and Shriner. For a time, he owned a champion indoor soccer team, the Dustdevils and an arena football team, the Sting. Ted passed away peacefully May 5, 2018, while surrounded by his family. He leaves behind an incredible legacy of community service.

These biographies are based on research and could contain discrepancies.
If there are any excerpts you feel should be changed please feel free to contact dave@lvhsaa.com

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