Celebrating the Life of

Raymon Perkins Dones

February 24, 1918 - March 25, 2011

Service

Thursday, March 31, 2011 • 11:00 AM
Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley
1 Lawson Road
Kensington, California

Monsignor Ray East Officiating
In Celebration of the Legacy of
Biography: RAYMON PERKINS DONES

On Sunday, February 24, 1918, Raymon Perkins Dones, was born to Sudie Perkins and Alvin Chester Dones in Marshall, Texas.

Ray spent a brief time in the Army, before pursuing higher learning at Howard University in Washington DC. Raymon’s love of trains inspired him to work as a Pullman car porter in Denver, Colorado, where he met and married his first wife, Leona Mae Nelson. From this marriage, three children were born, Raymond, Leona, and Michael. While living in Denver, Ray learned the electrical and plumbing trade from a local contractor.

After receiving his electrical contractors’ license, Ray formed “Dones Electric”, one of the Bay Area’s first minority, family-run contracting firms. Dones Electric was incorporated in 1953 as “Aladdin Electric”. In the same year, Ray met Inez East Lawson, who became his wife of over 50 years. Inez, a recent divorcee, was the mother of three children of her own, Maurice, James, and Adrienne. Ray and Inez blended their families and celebrated their union by marriage in 1954. To the union of the two families, Alan and Barbara (Bobbye) were born.

Ray worked to co-found Trans-Bay Engineers and Builders, a general contracting firm that became a leader in Bay Area and national residential and commercial construction. Having been impacted by racial discrimination in the building construction trade, Ray collaborated with good friend Joseph Debro and ten other minority contractors to change the face of the Bay Area and national contracting business. In 1968, the General and Specialty Contractors Association (GSCA) was formed as a resource for minority builders to ensure equitable job training and legislative support. In the same year, Ray was one of the founding members of the National Association of Minority Contractors (NAMC), a national trade organization headquartered in Washington DC. The birth of NAMC resulted in a major change in the building industry as minority participation was mandated in cities around the country. NAMC now boasts many chapters throughout the world.

In 1970, Trans-Bay made history when they partnered with Turner Construction to create the first joint venture project between a majority firm and a minority builder. During the 1970’s Trans-Bay Engineers was ranked number six in Black Enterprise Magazine’s 100 top companies list. During its 20 years of business, Trans Bay completed over $200 million worth of
construction contracts. In 1999, Engineering New-Record Magazine named Raymon Dones as one of the most influential people in the construction industry over a 125-year period.

Ray continued his activism in the community throughout his lifetime. He has served on the National Urban League, UC Regents Board of Advisors, the Oakland Chamber of Commerce, as well as a volunteer with the Museum of African-American Technology (MAAT).

Raymond was an innovative and progressive thinker. As an inventor, he developed sub-woofer speakers that create a bass sound system that is still in use today. Another invention is a catalytic converter for an internal combustion engine that produces more energy and less gas.

Known and loved for his strength, charisma, and shows of appreciation, Raymon Dones is loved and missed by immeasurable family members, friends, and business associates. Raymond was preceded in death by wife, Inez, sons Michael Dones and Raymond Dones and each of his four siblings. He is survived by children Maurice Lawson, Leona Pointer, James Lawson, Adrienne (Cookie) Guinn, Alan Dones, and Barbara (Bobbye) Dones. He is survived by 18 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren and 8 great-great grandchildren.
List of projects completed by Ray Dones companies:

Thomas L. Berkley Square (Developer) Mixed-Use Development Oakland, CA (2006)
Oakland Army Base - Building One
Structural Rehab Oakland, CA (1986)
Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center - Phase II
Interior Finish Work Oakland, CA (1985)
Oakland City Center (JV General Contractor & Electrical Contractor) Buildings 1 through 4 Complete Installation of Electrical System for High-rise Office Towers, Underground Parking Garage and Connecting Plaza Oakland, CA (1971 - 1983)
Buena Center (Prime Electrical Subcontractor) San Francisco,
Albany Hills Tower (Prime Electrical Subcontractor) New Construction of 1,200 unit Condominium Project Albany, CA
Homes Now in the Community
Ten Townhouses Oakland, CA (1982)
Van Nuys Building (JV General Contractor) Rehabilitation of 300 Elderly Housing Units Los Angeles, CA (1981)
El Bethel Terrace (JV General Contractor) 110 Units of Elderly Housing San Francisco, CA (1981)
Solar Records (General Contractor) New Construction of Six-Story Office Building Los Angeles, CA
Divisadero Heights (General Contractor) 33 Condominium Units San Francisco, CA (1983)
Oakland City Center (JV General Contractor & Electrical Contractor) Office Building III - Twelve-Story Office Building Oakland, CA (1981)
Trans-Pacific Center - Phase I (JV General Contractor) Seven-Story Retail & Office Building Oakland, CA (1980)
Downs Memorial Church (General Contractor) Addition and Remodel Oakland, CA (1978)
Herrick Memorial Hospital (JV Contractor) Structural Improvements Berkley, CA (1978)
Lockwood Gardens Modernization (JV Contractor) Rehabilitation of 200 units of Rental Housing for the Oakland Housing Authority Oakland, CA (1978)
Prescott Elementary School
Remodel and Classroom Additions Oakland, CA (1978)
United Airlines (JV General Contractor) Leasehold Improvements at SF Airport San Francisco, CA (1978)
Trans-Bay Building & Engineers
Two-story Office Building Oakland, CA (1977)
Oakland City Center (JV General Contractor & Electrical Contractor) Underground Parking Garage Oakland, CA (1976)
East Oakland Youth Development Center
Library, meeting rooms, gymnasium and recreational center Oakland, CA (1975)
Peralta Villa Modernization Homes (JV General Contractor) Rehabilitation of 390 Rental Housing Units for the Oakland Housing Authority Oakland, CA(1974)
Oakland Public School District
Remodel & Seismic Retrofit of Fremont High, Roosevelt Junior High and Oakland High Schools Oakland & Fremont, CA (1974 - 1978)
Jones Memorial Homes (JV General Contractor) Two Buildings of 89 Unit Rental Housing San Francisco, CA (1973)
MORH Housing (General Contractor) Three 12-Story Apartment Towers Oakland, CA (1972)
Oakland City Center (JV General Contractor & Electrical Contractor) Connecting Plaza Oakland, CA (1971 - 1978)
MORHousing (General Contractor) 126T Townhouses Oakland, CA (1971 - 1973)
Aladdin Electric / Diamond Electric
Two-Story Office & Warehouse Oakland, CA (1970)
Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School
Five Building Cluster Elementary School Oakland, CA (1970)
Bank of America
Construction of New Branch Offices Palo Alto, CA (1969)
Oak Knoll
Navy's First Turn-Key Housing Development Oakland, (1972)
West Oakland Health Center (General Contractor) Sitework and Erection of Medical Building Modules Oakland, CA (1969)