



- ▶ CLASSIFIEDS
- ▶ REAL ESTATE
- ▶ AUTOS
- ▶ JOBS
- ▶ MOM'S DAY GIFT GUIDE
- ▶ SHOPPING
- ▶ YELLOW PAGES

HOME NEWS WEATHER SPORTS BUSINESS A & E LIFESTYLES TRAVEL OPINION MULTIMEDIA BLOGS OBITS MARKETPLACE ABOUT US

Community | Crime | Crime Database | Fiesta | Education | Environment/Water | Health | KENS 5 Video | Local/State | Mexico advertisement  
 | Military | Nation/World | News Wire | News en Español | Politics | Religion | Special Sections | Traffic

## Obituaries

### Story Tools

- Instant Msg.
- Email Story
- Print this Story
- Mobile MySA
- XML News Feeds
- add to YAHOO!
- Local Alerts

### Headlines

Obituary:

Schwennesen, 25, had heart of a champion — on and off the court

Obituary: From 1930s, Prall was a fan of all things mechanical, electrical

Obituary: Baseball fan Williams enjoyed going to Astros games

Obituary: NEISD educator Windham, 76, loved kids, basketball

Obituary: Cancer cut Gonzales' life short, but didn't steal happy memories

### Other

#### Headlines

[an error occurred while processing this directive]

### Most

#### E-mailed

## Obituary: From 1930s, Prall was a fan of all things mechanical, electrical

Web Posted: 04/20/2008 12:03 AM CDT

**Kristina Lindberg**  
Express-News

At the age of 13, Bert A. Prall wrote a school paper that explained how he became interested in mechanics and electronics as a little child. His passion was sparked when he stuck his fingers into a Christmas lights socket as a 2-year-old boy and got shocked, he wrote.

Prall died March 30 of natural causes. He was 78.

Prall, who was born in Chicago and grew up in Winnetka, Ill. He embraced community service to offer mechanical and electrical help to fire departments, civil defense organizations and the Illinois National Guard. He operated his services right from the attic of his parents' house, friend William Lill of Glenview, Ill., said.

"We worked on projects many years ahead of the computer era," Lill said. "We were pioneers."

Prall, who worked with Lill, participated in perfecting the system for sending Teletype messages via radio.

"He was a fountain of knowledge," Lill said. "I was just in awe of him."

Prall played a part in installing a public safety radio and Teletype network in Illinois, his friend David Monroe said.

Prall's father started the Midwest Variety Inc. and was the president of Ben Franklin stores, which Prall later took over.

In 1978, Prall came to **Bert A. Prall**

### Top Jobs

WAITSTAFF, HOSTS  
LITTLE RED BARN  
A & B CDL DRIVERS  
Confidential  
HOUSEKEEPERS

[View All](#)

### Top Real Estate

FREE MLS SEARCH  
ABSOLUTELY  
GORGEOUS  
NW Quaint fixer upper

[View All](#)

Hispanic student faces unique challenges at community college

Educators, experts seek last word on grammar

Big 12: Aggies AD reveals planned renovations

Buck Harvey: The same drama, the same outcome, and the same Suns

Page 2: Oliver's Twist

View: **24 Hour** | 7 Day

San Antonio partly because he wanted to escape Chicago weather and traffic and partly because he was interested in the computer company Datapoint Corp., Monroe said.

"Bert worked as a consultant and started to install the network that Datapoint had invented," Monroe said.

In San Antonio, Prall founded a telecommunications installation and servicing company, and later served as a consultant for different companies.

One of Prall's favorite subjects was the history of telephones.

"He had a very large collection," Monroe said.

He was the owner of thousands of antique artifacts, including phones and switching systems at his home.

"It's not that big," Monroe said about the house. "It sure is full — floor to ceiling."

---

*klindberg@express-news.net*

#### Ads By Yahoo

**Refinance and Save \$1,000S**

\$150,000 Mortgage for \$483/month. Compare up to 4 free quotes.

**([www.pickamortgage.com](http://www.pickamortgage.com))**

**Refinance \$300,000 for Only \$965/Month**

\$300,000 Mortgage for only \$965/month. Save \$1,000's - No obligation.

**([www.HomeLoanHelpLine.com](http://www.HomeLoanHelpLine.com))**

**Fed Cuts Interest Rates Again**

Mortgage Rates Hit 26 Month Lows. Calculate Your New Mortgage Payment.

**([www.LowerMyBills.com](http://www.LowerMyBills.com))**

Feedback | Site Map | Privacy Policy | Terms Of Service  
 EN Subscription Services **Advertising:** Info | Disclaimer  
**About Us:** MySanAntonio.com | Express-News | KENS 5  
 Portions © 2008 KENS 5 and the San Antonio Express-News.  
 All rights reserved.

**HEARST** newspapers