

# RAMAC BUSINESS BLENDERS

Racine Riverside Marine hosted the July Business Blender with a great view of the river, enjoyment of the summer day, and chances to network between RAMAC members.



*Autumn Silhouette Gala*

16th NOV 2019  
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**EARLY BIRD TICKET SALES END OCTOBER 1, 2019**

Tickets are on sale at Eventbrite

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/autumn-silhouette-gala-2019-tickets-62262116667>

## AFTER 100 YEARS NELSON BROS. & STROM IS STILL YOUR PARTS R US MACHINE SHOP ANY PART • ANY SIZE • ANY TIME™

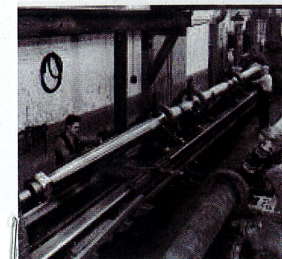
Nelson Bros. & Strom has been devoted to providing the highest level of service available in the machine job shop industry. Besides machining one-of-a-kind and prototype parts, they consult on customers' repairs and maintenance programs.

1919 was an important year in US history. The rotary dial telephone was invented; the Grand Canyon National Park was established by Congress, the 1st Pop Up Toaster was invented, the 1st NFL team from Wisconsin (The Green Bay Packers) was founded by Curly Lambeau; AND Nelson Bros. & Strom Company started their 1st day of business — September 10, 1919.



1919 – First shop location on 6th Street in Racine.

The Nelsons and Cliff Strom held US Patents for several parts including the Pressure Cooker, a Book Binding Machine, Racine Stokers for coal fired boilers, and several Gaging and Testing stations.



Propeller shaft being machined for USS Racine ship being launched.

But WWII changed things and pressure cookers gave way to large propeller shafts for Navy craft (including the USS Racine) and parts for torpedoes and Howitzer shells. By 1944 the US was three years into WWII, and NB&S was receiving the Department of Defense ARMY-NAVY "E" Award flag in the Park High School auditorium, an award for excellence in the production of war materials.

Located on Racine Street, NB&S had 200,000 sq. ft of machining space and 450 employees. Many of Racine's citizen's either worked for or had parents

and relatives that worked there. Some still have the company's orange badges with their father/mother's photo and NB&S employee number on them. Norman Merz, the company's shop superintendent, worked there for 60 years, starting May 11, 1936. Everyone knew Norman and respected his knowledge of machining and who did what machining in the area. Norman was Google before there was a Google. Call Norman for help, and he would respond, "Yah, yah, yah, get it over here, and we will take care of it." And when asked for a price, his response: "I'll tell you later." Then he would do the work, call the customer back, and give them the price.



1955 - Norman Merz with Herb Nelson at Boring Mill purchased in 1938. Mill still in use. Also shown: Merz's "Bible" of contacts.

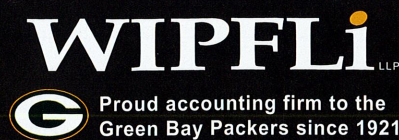
In 2009 the company decided to change ownership and become a State of WI Certified Women Owned Business to help customers satisfy their MBE (Minority Business Enterprise) goals. A move to a larger facility was required when they became GE & JGI/Komatsu certified suppliers. So, in 2012 NB&S moved into their current 45,500 sq. ft. shop, located at 2137 Roosevelt Avenue. Today this location has an overhead crane system and plenty of power and space for future expansion.

Now it is 2019. Need cash? Stop at an ATM. Need food? Swing through the drive-up window at McDonalds. Need a part for a million-dollar machine whose production is vital to company profitability? Just call Nelson Brothers & Strom Co. When something breaks and the clock is ticking, the machinists and engineers at Nelson & Strom are ready to get the job done and get equipment back up and running quickly. With everyone using just-in-time manufacturing techniques, nobody keeps spare parts on hand. As a result, Nelson Brother & Strom took on the moto Parts R Us Any Part • Any Size • Any Time™!

NB&S's trademarked "Parts R Us Any Part • Any Size • Any Time™" is also evident in the production work they do. NB&S employees adjust their personal

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schedules to meet the demands of customers. With the use of Solidworks design and Surfcam 5 axis manufacturing software, they can get most new production jobs sampled in 10 working days or less from the time the sample casting hits their floor.

Moving into the future, NB&S expects further growth in the service machining area as demand for OEM replacement and obsolete parts continues to expand. "Right now that is our largest landing page traffic on our website," states David Hall, VP. "Our reverse engineering capabilities and the ability to create a digital 3D model file for the customer is something our customers really like." Expanding also requires more employees. NB&S continues to work with RUSD and the Academies of Racine to find students with a passion for machining to enter the youth apprenticeship program. Gateway Tech is also there to provide continued education necessary to help a new employee succeed as a machinist.

The Nelsons & Cliff Strom started their company 100 years ago on the premise that customer service is the most important thing. They still practice that today.

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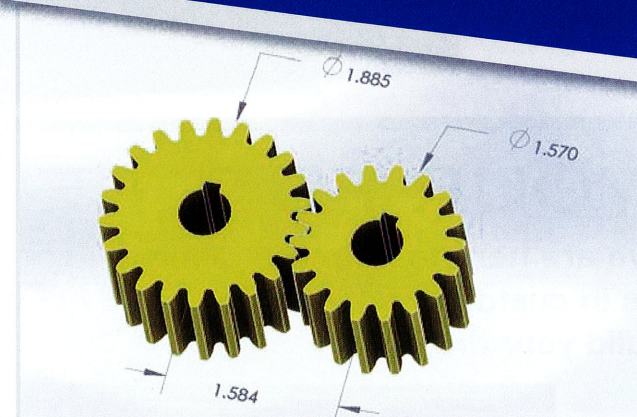


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### Quick Turnaround Success Story

A local mustard manufacturer contacted NB&S on a Saturday, needing replacement gears for a seed grinder they wanted operative by Sunday night. No problem. Here was the timeline:

- 9:36 am Saturday - mechanic contacts NB&S
- 10:30 am - damaged gears arrive at NB&S
- 1 pm - gears are reverse engineered and drawing files sent to the mustard company for approval
- 2:30 pm - material for the gears in stock @ NB&S, approval received, work began on gears
- 9:30 am on Sunday - gear mesh and fit of the first set was approved by the mechanic
- 4:15 pm - new replacement gears were delivered to the mechanics
- Success! Mustard grind machine running before 3rd shift arrived for work



Drawing of reverse engineered gears.

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