



CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF

# Russell D. Olson

JULY 31, 1932 - MARCH 30, 2023

## Letting Go

The Angels gathered near your bed,  
so very close to you,  
For they knew the *pain and suffering*  
that you were going through.

I thought about so many things,  
as I held tightly to your hand.  
Oh, HOW I WISHED that you were strong  
and happy once again.

But your eyes were looking homeward,  
to that place beyond the sky.  
Where JESUS held His outstretched arms,  
it was time *to say goodbye.*

I struggled with my SELFISH THOUGHTS,  
for I wanted you to stay.  
So we could walk and talk again,  
like we did - just yesterday.

But JESUS KNEW THE ANSWER,  
and I knew He loved you so.  
So I gave to you life's greatest gift,  
*the gift of letting go.*

Now my heart will carry MEMORIES  
of the love you gave to me  
*Until we meet again* in heaven,  
where the best is yet to be.

### Services At:

Pedersen Funeral Home  
Saturday - May 20, 2023 - 1:00 p.m.

### Officiating Clergy:

Connie Spanswick

### Family Remembrances:

Lisa Olson, Jenny Schaefer  
& Serena Schaefer

### Musical Selections:

"What a Friend We Have in Jesus"  
"Thank You For Being My Dad"

### Honorary Urnbearers:

#### *Russell's Grandchildren:*

Hunter, Anna, Serena, Echo, Colton & Aiden

### Military Honors:

Fort Sisseton VFW Post 3342  
American Legion Post 50

### Interment:

Nidaros Cemetery  
Hammer, South Dakota

Russell David Olson was born on July 31, 1932, at his home in Minnesota Township, rural New Effington, Roberts County, South Dakota. He was baptized and confirmed at Nidaros Lutheran Church in Hammer, South Dakota. Russell began kindergarten at New Effington Schools, however, only being able to speak Norwegian, he was sent home until he could learn English. Two years later, he began his schooling, graduating with the New Effington Class of 1952. Following high school, knowing that he would eventually be drafted into the military, he enlisted into the National Guard for a couple months before transferring to the United States Navy, a dream that he had since was seven years old. He began his service in the Navy in 1952, on the LMSR 404 Ship, serving in Korea. He was honorably discharged in 1956 and moved to St. Paul, Minnesota. Russell worked for Hancock Nelson Wholesale Grocery as a forklift driver for over 30 years. While there, he met Marie Farinella, who worked in the office. The two began dating and were married on May 14, 1960 at St. Matthews Lutheran Church. They made their home in St. Paul and welcomed two daughters to their family. After the grocery wholesaler closed, Russell drove a delivery van for two different print companies before his retirement in the early 90's. They remained in St. Paul until June of 2021, when they moved to Morris to be closer to their daughter. Marie preceded Russell in death in April of 2022. Russell moved to Minnewaska Lutheran Home in Starbuck in October of 2021, and then to West Wind Village in February 2022, where he lived until his death.

Russell was proud to be a Veteran, he was a member of the Mendota Heights VFW, AmVets and served as color guard for many funerals. He was a member of the Gloria Dai Church and later Fort Snelling Church, both of St. Paul. For over 30 years, every Thursday night, Russell would bowl with his team on the league. He also enjoyed woodworking, having redone all of the trim and molding in their home and building birdhouses. Russell was an avid football fan, especially the Minnesota Vikings. He was lucky enough to attend the first Vikings game in the new stadium with his brother. Saturdays were for football, especially college and professional football – a game was always on the tv if he wasn't at a game. He also had a love of animals, especially horses and dogs. Mostly, Russell cherished the time he was able to spend with his family, especially keeping up with his grandchildren – they were his pride and joy! After moving into the West Wind Village, Russell met Sharon Boyle. These two became fast friends, partners-in-crime, pranksters, and card mates.

Russell died peacefully on Thursday, March 30, 2023, at the West Wind Village in Morris, he was 90 years old.

Russell is survived by his daughters: Lisa (Andy Kessler) Olson of Hastings, Jennifer (Kevin) Schaefer of Alberta; 5 grandchildren: Anna (Logan) Blaske, Colton (Shay Williams) Schaefer, Serena Schaefer, Echo Schaefer, Hunter Olson; great-grandson, Aiden Blaske; sister, Virginia (Victor) Chilson of White Bear Lake; brothers: Allen Olson of Minneapolis Leo Olson of Starbuck, and Omar (Barb) Olson of Albertville; sister-in-law, Bonnie Hau of Chisago; brother-in-law Ervin Farinella of Inver Grove Heights; and several nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his parents: David and Martina Olson; wife, Marie; sister, Helen Kelly; nephew, David Chilson; and beloved dog, Sammy.

**Pedersen**  
Funeral & Cremation Service

