



Nels E. Olson

May 18, 1931 - June 25, 2022

Nels Elvin Olson, 91, a lifelong resident of rural Neosho County, passed away peacefully on Saturday, June 25, 2022 at Kansas City Hospice House in Kansas City, Missouri with his daughter by his side, and surrounded by the love of his family. Nels was born on May 18, 1931 to Virgil and Myrtle (McGuffey) Olson on the family farm in Odense, Kansas.

Nels belonged to a generation that wasted nothing and knew the value of hard work and education. He began his education in a one room schoolhouse that laid the foundation for his thirst for knowledge and created the lifelong reader he became. Nels then went on to attend Stark High School and graduated from Chanute High School. Nels often remarked that he had to work much harder for good marks in school during his years in rural education than he did once he began attending school in Chanute.

From the young age of 15, Nels' father taught him how to operate a bulldozer and thus began his construction of many ponds and other projects around Neosho County. His mechanical skills seemed to just improve naturally – he could fix just about anything. The work ethic Nels possessed had him either bulldozing, in the field cropping, working cattle, baling his alfalfa (always in those small, square bales) or helping out a neighbor at any time from sun-up to sun-down. He treated his herd with the gentlest hands, never raising his voice to them and nurturing his land with the same loving touch. Nels was always resourceful in strategies to provide for his family. He could figure up the pay for his help in his head when it came to baling those square bales, and he would often labor all day in the winter caring for his livestock, then haul a load of hay all the way to Arkansas overnight, returning just in time to start his long days over again. Nels was honored to be the caretaker of his Grandpa Nels' farm, which had been in the Olson family and farmed by a direct descendant for 110 years. In spare time, Nels found joy in hunting. He was a superior marksman, hunting his own game – be it quail, pheasant, elk in Colorado, deer, or wild turkey - up until his 90th year, and his legendary, yet true stories, are memories his family will treasure.

On October 12, 1950, Nels married his soul mate, Phyllis Schulenberg, and they created a

home that was full of love, laughter, and comfort for 38 years. Having a large family was always their goal, and together they had four daughters (the latter two, Cali and Carol, passing in infancy). Their home was always full of family and friends, with wide open doors and home cooked meals. His legacy then grew from his daughters, Cindy and Cooker, who later had their own children, giving Nels the opportunity to perfect his storytelling skills with his grandchildren, one of his many talents. Time spent with the kids meant he was allowed to be ornery and playful, anything to bring a smile. He was the “favorite” uncle to his nieces and nephews, and a cherished “Grampy” to his grand and great-grandchildren.

After Phyllis’ passing, Nels married Marian Weir, sharing 32 years of marriage. She survives of the home.

Nels leaves behind many memories and smiles, from teaching all of his grandchildren to fish with a cane pole, to hunting with his grandson Andy, to pulling pranks with Mick, and annual trips to Colorado with Cindy and Cooker. The lessons and knowledge he gifted to his community, friends and family are merely the beginning of the legacy of a life well-lived.

Nels is survived by his wife Marian, of the home

His Daughters:

Cindy (John) Lemons of Erie, KS

Cathy (Michael) Rydquist aka “Mick and Cooker” of Kansas City, KS

His Granddaughters:

Kërsten (Andy) Gray of Shawnee, KS

Keaton Millison of Kansas City, KS

His Great grandchildren:

Kallie Millison

Jaycee Millison

Jet Millison

Gretchen Gray

Georgia Gray

Sister Neva Redburn, of Chanute,

several nieces and nephews,

and Marian’s sons, Mike and David Weir

Nels was preceded in death by:

His parents, Virgil and Myrtle Olson

His first wife, Phyllis and two infant daughters

His Siblings:

Everett Olson,

Norma Hall,

Leon Olson,

Richard Olson,

Jerry Olson.

His Grandsons:

Dean and Mike Lemons,

Ryan Olson,

And his great-grandson Gage Lemons.

Family will receive friends and relatives on Friday, July 1, 2022 for visitation at Countryside Funeral Home in Chanute, KS from 5-7pm.

Service will be held for Nels at Countryside Funeral Home in Chanute on July 2, 2022 at 11:00am with interment to immediately follow at Odense Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to Friends Home Lutheran Church in Savonburg, KS, Kansas City Hospice House, or Pass It On - Outdoor Mentors Inc. and can be mailed to or left with the funeral home.

Online condolences can be left at www.countrysidefh.com. Services entrusted to Countryside Funeral Home, 101 N. Highland, Chanute, KS 66720.

Cemetery Details

Odense Cemetery

15000 230th Rd.
Erie, KS 66733

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 1. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Countryside Funeral Home - Johnson Chapel
101 N. Highland
Chanute, KS 66720
(620) 431-1220
<https://www.countrysidefh.com>

Service

JUL 2. 11:00 AM (CT)

Countryside Funeral Home - Johnson Chapel
101 N. Highland
Chanute, KS 66720
(620) 431-1220
<https://www.countrysidefh.com>

Tribute Wall

MM

“ Nels brought hay to our farm for years and years in Missouri. He was honest, fair, and happy and always on time. He helped us and made it possible for us to survive. When my dad past he would stop by and check on us on the way to Branson. We appreciate all he did to help us along the way.

Michael McCullough - May 12, 2023 at 05:43 AM

TS

“ I cut Nels hair for years and years bless his heart he followed me where ever I went.
I remember cutting his hair and finishing up trimming his eyebrows was especially hard to cut then I realised I had his eyelid. Oh Nels I'm so so sorry I said he laughed and said if you cut any more I was going to have to say something. He will be missed!

Tammy Seibel - July 03, 2022 at 04:05 PM

JC

“ The John Carlson (son of Milo, Nels' cousin) family have many pleasant memories of our visits to the Carlson family farm near Erie and fellowship with Nels and Marion. Nels was a faithful steward of our farm for many years (20) at the direction of my dad Milo... which allowed my mom and dad to live at Pampa, TX (knowing the farm was in good hands) and visit their beloved Neosho county farm and Kansas relatives. I always enjoyed my visits and tutorials with Nels when I retired 24 years ago and ranched in eastern Texas. Nels Olson...a true gentleman!!!
John H Carlson - Pampa, Texas.

john H Carlson - July 01, 2022 at 12:51 PM

DD

“ Denise and Craig Duke purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Nels E. Olson.



Denise and Craig Duke - July 01, 2022 at 10:42 AM

KD

“ Dear Cooker, Mick & your entire family,
We know your father through you both. That is the most powerful legacy a
humble, happy human can leave to the world.
Kathleen & Dennis Dickson
Kevin, Aaron & Steven & their families

Kathleen Dickson - June 30, 2022 at 10:11 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Nels E.
Olson.



June 30, 2022 at 07:12 AM

TE

“ Cindy, Cooker and families, U. Nels was one of a kind! I will never forget the great
times we had on the farm, 4th of July, home made ice cream, fishing, swimming...I
wish every kid could experience what we did.

Terry - June 29, 2022 at 07:04 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of
Nels E. Olson.



June 29, 2022 at 05:23 PM

JB

“ Nels was one of the best Masons Ever. He worked on our fund raiser year round,
always smiling and never saying anything bad to anyone. We will all miss him
dearly.

John Lee Barker - June 29, 2022 at 11:12 AM