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## Obituary Database Search

### Obituary Database Record

<b>Name</b>	<b>Residence</b>	
Jay C. Mueller <sup>145</sup>	Anchorage, AK	
<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>
92	N/A	10/11/2015

#### Obituary / Death Notice

Jay Carlyle Mueller died in Anchorage on October 11, 2015, just short of age 92, after having a long, fun, hardworking and adventurous life. He was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1923 to Omar and Elsa Mueller. He has joined his wife of 49 years, Barbara, his son Jay C. Mueller Jr. ("Carl"), and all four of his siblings, Ernst, Werner, Erna and Omar Johnny. From an early age, he had a love of the outdoors and especially hunting, and both were integral in shaping his destiny in Alaska. Back in Cleveland, he attended University School, and then, going against the tradition of his father and brothers, chose to attend **Williams College** over Harvard because of Williams' hunting opportunities in the campus' surrounding woods. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Biology. After college, he worked on the secret WWII Proximity Fuze project, and in the stifling hot Cleveland steel mills. He knew mountains and vast wilderness were waiting out west, having worked summers in the Rocky Mountains of the US and Canada, and the calling was irresistible. He and his friend Jim Reid drove to Seattle and boarded a ship for Alaska in 1948. His plan was to hunt, fish, and start a mink farm, but on board that ship was a beautiful Boston debutante, Barbara, and that fact would completely alter his plans. Jay fished the Russian River but then came to Anchorage to begin courting Barbara. Here, he met his future brother-in-law and business partner, Barrie White, Jr. Jay did manage to start a mink farm but failed at it due to his stock being all males. He worked for the railroad but didn't like working for others. He then managed a group of rental homes near 5th Avenue and Eagle Street. He wanted to marry Barbara but was nearly broke, so he sent her back home to Massachusetts so he could concentrate on ideas to make money, and they didn't see each other for six months. On the way back east, Barbara stopped in Cleveland to meet her future mother-in-law. She told Barbara that, as much as she adored her son Jay, he would never amount to anything; he just liked the simple outdoor life. Jay said many times that had he not met Barbara he wouldn't have met their friends and his business partners and therefore wouldn't have amounted to much of anything. Jay and Barbara were married in 1950 in Salem, Massachusetts. Their honeymoon was spent driving back up to Alaska. Their first home, with a bunk bed, was in a court called Chugach Cabins on Fourth Avenue. Jay operated them for a year before selling them. He then tried to be a real estate salesman but failed (he bought his first listing himself, a small house on Cottonwood Drive in Rogers Park). He and Barbara lived there for two years before he built a house on two lots on the east end of Bannister Drive to hold his growing family, Sylenda Harvey, Jay C. Mueller Jr. ("Carl") and Judith B. Mueller. He told his children on numerous occasions that of all his accomplishments, he was most proud of his children. In the mid-1950s, Jay spent his time studying property investments before partnering with his brother-in-law, Barrie, to form the first of several real estate investment companies that bought some of the undeveloped land around the Anchorage bowl and hillside. Some 1,800 acres of the land, held by Alaska Lands Inc., and Alvest, was developed into commercial properties and residential subdivisions, but most was sold off for later development by others. Some of the roads on the hillside were named by Jay, but none were named after him or his family. Also, in his early years in Alaska, Jay got his guiding license and continued guiding people from all walks of life, along with his friends, on and off for many years. He needed a pilots license to get them to the choice spots, so he got his license in 1958. Soon after, he and his business partnership each bought a floatplane, and one was parked on Lake Spenard, the other on Lake Hood. Over the years, he flew Super Cubs, 180s and 185s on floats like a true bush pilot, always by the seat of his pants. He never hesitated to land south on Lake Spenard with his family, dog, gear, and extra gas in the Cessna 185, a water lane considered way too short for that. He also survived a catastrophic plane crash in 1960. Flying around his duck cabin at Trading Bay with his lab, and his friend Harry Blair, at around 500 hundred feet to see where the ducks were, a goose suddenly veered very high and left, away from its flock, and smashed into the

wing of Jay's 180. The goose traveled the entire leading edge of the plane's wing, crumpling it so the plane spiraled down and crashed into shallow water and mud. When Jay came to, his scalp was hanging over his eyes. When the FAA rep saw the horribly mangled plane, he remarked "No one could have possibly survived that crash". But Jay and Harry would recover. His lab never would jump into any airplane again. His airplanes on floats gave Jay the opportunity to enjoy his (or his share) of several cabins around fishing and hunting country. One was at Bulchitna Lake, near Lake Creek. Another was at Lost Lake, about 10 minutes by air north of Anchorage. On Montague Island, at Jeanie Lake, he built a small cabin in the woods where he would hunt deer but also take his family for fun weekends playing on the expansive beach. The Forest Service has since torn it down. His Trading Bay cabin was a duck shack anchored to the mud flats to serve his life-long passion, bird hunting. He also co-owned a cabin on Kodiak Island for deer hunting with his long-time friend, Frank Cook, each of their sons, and Rick Harvey (Jay's son-in-law). But the one place he felt most at ease was his cabin at Lachbuna Lake. It's the only in-holding in the Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. When he could no longer fly, he and Barbara gifted it to Nature Conservancy to prevent it from being developed and commercialized. Around 1965, Jay was contracted to build the Anchorage Sports Arena at Fireweed and C Street, "the largest clear span building in Alaska", as he wrote. He also started his own company, Mueller Enterprises, and built several apartment buildings around town, the last being The Taiga Twins, near C Street and 21st. He also built The Carlyle, a commercial building at Northern Lights Blvd. and Denali Street. Around 1968, then-Governor Wally Hickel asked Jay to head the Alaska State Housing Authority which he did until he felt he had done what had been specifically asked of him. On day one, Jay told all his employees that they would park out back and leave all the parking near the front door for the public. Upon his departure, his employees presented him with a large silver tray which reads "...in recognition of his outstanding leadership, responsiveness to public needs, and above all, for his unfailing integrity." Quickly back to investing, Jay and Barrie bought the Anchorage Legal Center building at 1016 W 6th Avenue in 1972. (Jay eventually bought Barrie out, but the property was later conveyed to New York Life in the great real estate bust of 1986.) The Legal Center became their new office, having moved from near the corner of 4th and I Streets. Those two office locations probably led Jay to a deep friendship with Wally Hickel, the owner of the Captain Cook Hotel where Jay and Barrie had lunch every weekday for decades. After those lunches, Jay would work out in the hotel's Athletic Club with his friends, and then famously take a nap on a bench in the locker room while loud noise continued around him. He had countless conversations with lawyers, politicians and bankers, usually playing Devil's Advocate to incite lively discussion. Wally Hickel had gifted Jay a lifetime membership in the Athletic Club several decades ago. His life was rich with so much going on at the same time. He filled our childhood with wild pets including a full-blooded wolf named Gypsy. As a young adult, she was forced to go to the Alaska Zoo, where she lived a very long life and became the oldest breeding wolf in captivity. Jay also had an active social life, with Barbara, with many great long-time friends and their parties in the 1960's and 70's are legendary. He retired from work early, having been selfemployed most of his life and truly lived on his terms. He bought one of the first condos sold at Wailea, Maui when it was all lava and red mud so he could go running in the morning, play tennis and then a round of golf all in the same day. For the twenty winters they spent on Maui, they had many friends to socialize with thanks to Barbara, who befriended other condo owners and local islanders equally. Later, he and Barbara moved their winter home to the Big Island, and later to Tucson. He traveled around the world in 1968, stopping in Kenya to hunt big game, and returned to Africa (Botswana) two more times later in life for photo-safaris. His great health in his 80's had him playing golf in the summer, hunting pheasants with his family in South Dakota in the fall, and traveling in the winter. Jay and his colorful stories will be sorely missed. The family has made donations in his name to Providence Hospice and to Nature Conservancy. The family would like to thank a heart felt gratitude to Home Instead. His children invite friends and admirers to a celebration of life at the Captain Cook Hotel's Quarter Deck on Friday, November 6 from 5 to 8 pm.

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