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Norman L. Olson Jr.(1927 - 2018)



Olson, Jr., Norman L. Norman L. Olson, Jr., 90, died on May 16, 2018 surrounded by his family. He enjoyed a full and rich life as a beloved son, brother, husband, father, uncle, grandfather and great-grandfather. Born June 17, 1927 in Oak Park, Illinois, he was the eldest son of Norman Louis and Helen Wickman Olson. He had three brothers, Gerald G. (deceased), Donald H. (81) and Jon W. "Jack" (deceased). He grew up in Park Ridge and attended Maine Township High School. There he excelled in academics, sports and various high school organizations. Norm served in the Navy upon graduation from high school. He also witnessed and rejoiced in the last century's Cubs world championship in 1945. He graduated from Williams College, class of 1950, in Williamstown, Massachusetts. He was a varsity athlete in football and was elected President of Phi Delta Theta fraternity. In 2000, he was selected by his classmates to be President of his 1950 class at their 50th reunion. In 1951, he married Anna Hopkins Brodie who was a 1951 Smith College graduate. They initially lived in California but moved permanently back to Illinois where he entered the University of Illinois College of Law in 1954. With Ann, he had four children: Kristine Ann (1952), David Douglas (1955), Jon Brodie (1958) and Todd Norman (1962). The family lived in Northfield and all four children attended New Trier High School. In 1976, Ann died of complications from leukemia after a 3 year battle. Her courage and selflessness fortified her family during that difficult time. Norm rose to the challenges of being a single parent. In 1980, Norm married Katherine Laun Hodgson whose children were Christopher Laun Hodgson (1964), Mark Girard Hodgson (1966) and Margot Dunn Hodgson (1967). Norm and his expanded family delighted in long summer days at their beach home in White Lake, Michigan. He passed on his love of skiing, fishing, hiking and the Great American West from their home in Snowmass, Colorado. Norm's legal career began at the LaSalle Street firm Ashcraft, Olson, Beach, Kimball, Alexander and Edmonds. He was initially a generalist, but his practice gravitated towards corporate law, estates and trusts. He made partner in 1960. In 1978, he left the firm to be the founder of what was then called Olson & Hoffman. In 1996, O&H was renamed Olson, Grabill and Hoffman. Then in 2001, the firm took its present name Olson, Grabill and Flitcraft. He also served several local municipalities and was on the Board of Trustees of the Village of Northfield, Elk Grove Park District and Park Ridge Park District. Norm had a deep love of music and was an accomplished piano player. In the 1960s he was an active participant in the musical group "Off the Ground" and loved to play the piano at any venue or event where he was able to persuade his way onto the keyboard. In August 2004, Norm suffered a severe stroke. He became a star patient at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. With his trademark determination, he relearned how to walk. While the stroke would impact the remainder of his life, his family and friends recall his great zest for life and his indomitable spirit. On his 90th birthday, he entertained family and friends with a confident and generous perspective that belied his disability. He is survived by Katie and their children and spouses, together with 15 grandchildren, 1 great-granddaughter and countless canine buddies: Erik and Mike (Kris), Charlie, Annie and Brodie (Dave and Mimi), Gunnar, Elsa and Jack (Jon), Taylor, Griffin and Stephanie (Todd and Leslie), (Chris and Kathy), Will, Owen and Graham (Mark and Christine), Wilson (Margot and Jack) and great-granddaughter Charlotte (Erik and Rachel). He also loved and was loved by his nieces and nephews from the Olson, Brodie, Jannotta, Hart, Hummel and Tukey families. He was also devoted to Katie's sister Gina Laun Jannotta and her extended family. In lieu of flowers, gifts may be made to the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab (formerly Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago) in memory of Norman L. Olson, Jr., Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, 355 East Erie Street, Chicago, IL 60611, <https://www.sralab.org/give> A memorial service will be held at 5 p.m. on June 21, 2018 at Kenilworth Union Church.

Sign Guest Book at [legacy.suntimes.com](https://www.sralab.org/give)

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