



Gary L. Olson

July 7, 1935 - January 26, 2011

Glendive, Montana: Gary L. Olson, age 75, passed away on Saturday, January 22, 2011 at the Glendive Medical Center. Visitation will be held from 12:00 P.M. until 5:00 P.M. and 6:00 P.M. until 8:00 P.M. on Tuesday, January 25, 2011 and from 9:00 A.M. until 12:00 P.M. on Wednesday, January 26, 2011 in the chapel of the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home in Glendive. Visitation will also be held one hour prior to Funeral Services. Funeral Services with military honors will be held at 2:00 P.M. on Wednesday, January 26, 2011 at Zion Lutheran Church in Glendive with Pastor Avis Anderson officiating, these services may be viewed by live web cast at www.zionglendive.com. Private family interment will be held Friday, January 28, 2011 at Dawson Memorial Cemetery in Glendive. Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home of Glendive has been entrusted with the arrangements. Gary was born July 7, 1935, the son of Julius and Bergetta (Paulson) Olson in Libby, Montana. He was raised and educated in Reeder, North Dakota graduating from Reeder High School with the class of 1953. As a young man, Gary joined the United States Army in 1955 and served as a Korean Linguist until his honorable discharge in 1958. After leaving the military, he joined the Glendive Police Department and served on its force for the next four years, holding the rank of sergeant when he resigned. Gary then worked as a land agent for Montana Dakota Utilities for approximately one year. Gary married Carole Hetland on August 20, 1962 in Scranton, North Dakota and to this union two children were born, a son Stephen and a daughter, Stacy. On January 28, 1963, Gary was appointed as

the Dawson County Undersheriff and served under Sheriff George Rice for nearly two years. In August of 1964, Gary resigned from the Dawson County Sheriff's Department in order to attend Black Hills State College in Spearfish, South Dakota. An honor student, Gary graduated at the top of his class in 1966 with a bachelor of science degree. After receiving his bachelor's degree, Gary and his wife moved to Forsyth, Montana, where Gary taught social studies and political science. In the summer of 1967, the family returned to Glendive and Gary became one of the state's youngest police chiefs at the age of 31. Gary would serve as Glendive's Police Chief for the next two years. In 1969, Gary left the Glendive Police Department and established the Police Sciences Program at Dawson Community College. This would be the first program of its type in a three state area and would offer a two year degree in Law Enforcement. In 1971, Gary was nominated by the college for an "Outstanding Educator of America" award. While the Law Enforcement Program Director and an instructor at Dawson, Gary would complete his master's degree from Northern Montana College in Havre, Montana, in 1979. Gary was also the recipient of a fellowship to study South East Asia at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota in both 1980 and 1981. After many years of hard work and dedication to his profession, Gary retired from Dawson Community College in 1993. Throughout the years, Gary was involved in a variety of activities both within his community and within the state. Gary was a member of many law enforcement and criminal justice organizations and served on numerous committees. Most notable of these was his seventeen years spent serving on the Montana Peace Officers Standards and Training Advisory Council. Over the years Gary was appointed to the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration's Regional Advisory Committee, serving as a member of the Governor's Crime Control Commission, was vice president of the Montana Association of Chiefs of Police, was a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, was Secretary for the Montana Association of Criminal Justice Educators, and was director of the North Central State Crime Conference. In addition to his law enforcement activities,

Gary also served on various committees, councils, and boards locally, including the board of directors for the Glendive Chamber of Commerce, the Elementary School Board, as a city alderman and a member of the Montana League of Cities and Towns. He was also a member of the Glendive Elks Lodge #1324. What was special about Gary Olson was his dedication to service and his unending hard work and perseverance. Gary had done a lot for law enforcement in this state and for the Law Enforcement Program at Dawson Community College. Gary enjoyed cooking and gave away 80% of the bread he baked to friends and neighbors. He enjoyed reading, visiting with friends, going for walks, playing with his Schnauzer, "Shadow" and watching old John Wayne and World War II movies. Gary had a great sense of humor. Gary is preceded in death by his parents. Survivors include his wife Carole of Glendive; son, Stephen (Terisa) of Derby, Kansas; daughter, Stacy (Tim) Swan of Fredericksburg, Virginia; five grandchildren; and two sisters, Phyllis Olson, of Kennewick, Washington and Evelyn Olson of Nevada.

Tribute Wall



“ Gary L. Olson

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