



His Smile

*Though his smile is gone
And his hand I cannot touch
I still have so many memories
Of the one I loved so much.
His memory is now my keepsake
Which with I'll never part.
God has him in his keeping
I have him in my heart.*

Celebrating THE *Life* OF

Russel Wolff

AUGUST 25, 1930 – DECEMBER 19, 2025

Services At:

Assumption Catholic Church - Morris, MN
Monday - December 29, 2025 - 10:30 a.m.

Officiating Clergy:

Father Todd Schneider

Musicians:

Ken and Linda Hodgson

Pallbearers:

Maggie Horning, Laura Ennen, Emma Wentz
Jacob Zosel, Joe Wolff
Sam Wolff, Brian Ennen
Isaac Wentz, Lexi Zosel

Interment:

Calvary Cemetery - Morris, MN
Spring Burial

Russ passed away peacefully on Friday, December 19, 2025, at St. Cloud Hospital in St. Cloud, Minnesota, at the age of 95, following a fall. He had undergone his first triple bypass surgery at the age of 52 and, by the grace of God and with the steadfast support of his loving wife, Joan, was blessed with an additional 43 years of life. In his final days, Russ was surrounded by family, filling his hospital room with laughter, stories, and card games, exactly as he would have wanted.

Russ was born on August 25, 1930, to George and Clara (Hanebuth) Wolff in Perham, Minnesota. He graduated from Waubun High School in 1949 and earned his teaching degree from Teachers College in Mayville, North Dakota, in 1953. He later completed his master's degree at the University of North Dakota.

In 1953, Russ was drafted into the United States Army and proudly served during the Korean War. He served with honor and distinction and was honorably discharged in 1955.

After his military service, Russ devoted his life to education, spending decades as a teacher and making a lasting impact on countless students. He loved helping young people grow and succeed, and many carried his lessons long after leaving his classroom.

While teaching in Cyrus, Minnesota, Russ met the love of his life, Joan Finnegan, on a blind date. They married on June 20, 1959, beginning a partnership that lasted more than six decades. Together, they raised three children. The family lived in Glenwood, Alvarado, and Bertha before settling in Morris, where Russ continued his teaching career and embraced one of his greatest passions, coaching track. He treasured the time spent with his athletes, celebrating their successes and instilling perseverance, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

Russ was a lover of the outdoors and cherished time spent fishing with family and friends at Moose Lake. He and Joan purchased land in Pennington, Minnesota, with close teaching friends, known as "The Moose Lake 5," creating a special gathering place for their families. Moose Lake was where stories were shared, bonfires were enjoyed, and lasting memories were made, a legacy that continues today as their families still spend time there together. Russ also maintained ownership of his childhood home in Waubun, where he enjoyed mowing, hunting, and spending time with family. Always appreciating the simple pleasures of life outdoors. A skilled handyman, he delighted in fixing things, leaving behind many tangible reminders of his talents and care.

Russ was involved in his community. After retiring from teaching, he worked at Kleespie Tank and served as the gambling manager for the Eagles Club. He was a member of the American Legion and the Knights of Columbus.

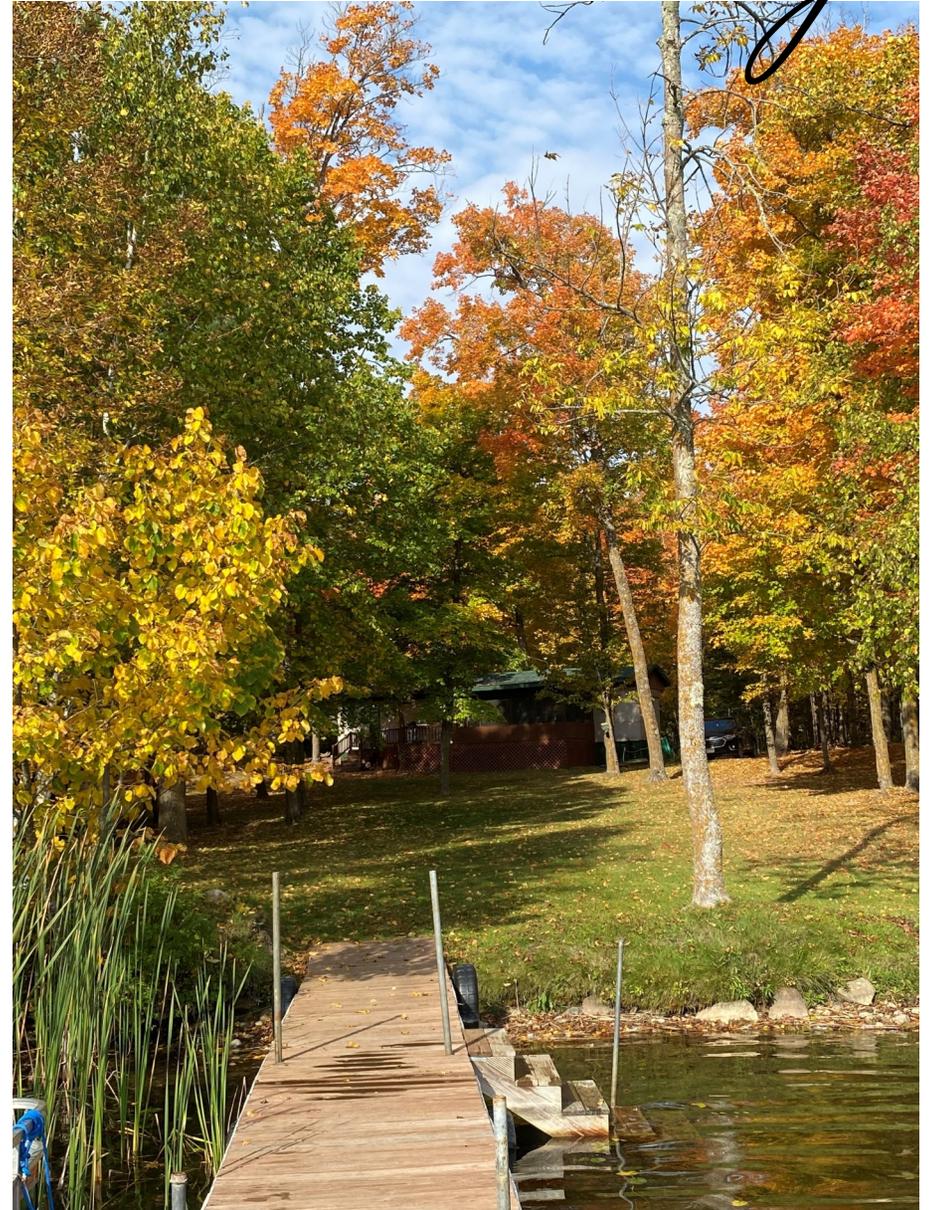
Above all, family was Russ's greatest joy. He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He rarely missed a grandchild's sporting event and could always be found cheering proudly from the stands. When his great-grandchildren arrived, Russ became a kid again, often on the floor playing with them and always finding ways to make them smile. Not many people can say they were tackling Great Grandpa when he was 95! Time spent with his family, whether at games, gatherings, or quiet moments together, brought him immense joy and created a lasting foundation of love that will continue through generations.

Russ will be dearly missed by his wife of 66 years, Joan; his children, Robert (Jennifer) Wolff of Chaska, David (Jessie) Wolff of Chokio, and Mary (Tom) Zosel of Morris; his grandchildren, Maggie Horning, Laura (Brian) Ennen, Emma (Isaac) Wentz, Jacob (Lexi) Zosel, Joe Wolff, and Sam Wolff; and seven great-grandchildren, Mason, Brynlee, Madison, Hayley, Natalie, Oaks, and Leo. He is also survived by his sister, Beverly Beling, brother-in-law, Larry Finnegan, and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, George and Clara Wolff; his brother, Donald Wolff; sisters Viola (Leonard) Olson, Evelyn (Richard) Kvamme, and Helen (Ronald) Fasteen; brother-in-law, Lloyd Beling; parents-in-law, Joe and Norma Finnegan; and sister-in-law, Nancy Finnegan.

Russ was steadfast in his faith and lived with a deep trust in God. As we mourn his loss on earth, we also celebrate his incredible life and take comfort knowing he now rejoices in the presence of Jesus, spending Christmas and all eternity in His love.

I N L O V I N G *Memory*



Please use this QR Code to access
Russel's online guestbook and tribute video.

Pedersen
Funeral & Cremation Service

Russel Wolff
1930 - 2025