



Dale W. Olson

July 27, 1941 - May 7, 2019

Dr. Dale W. Olson, 77, of Cedar Falls passed away Tuesday, May 7th, 2019, at UnityPoint Health-Allen Hospital, Waterloo.

He leaves behind his wife, Ann Balm-Olson; his sister, Carmen Jass of Jackson, MN; his sons Jeff Olson (wife Lynn) of Aspen, CO; Dustin, Derek and Daniel Balm, of Cedar Falls; daughters Sara Taylor (husband Chris) of Poughkeepsie, NY and Joan Balm (husband Corey) of Cedar Falls; grandchildren, Kayla Balm, Trevor Balm (wife Alex), Kiley Rasmussen, Keenan Rasmussen, Aiden Taylor, Chase Taylor and Riley Olson; great-grandson Jonathan, his mother-in-law Catherine Bushby, and numerous extended family.

Dale was born to Fern and David Olson and raised on a farm in rural Minnesota. He earned his doctorate in physics from University of Rochester in 1970. He served as a professor of physics at University of Northern Iowa from 1968 until he retired in 2017. His research focused on holography and optics. During his tenure, Dr. Olson enjoyed his research collaborations with students and colleagues, and most recently expressed interest in robotics, and photovoltaics. He was a life-long learner and continuously encouraged others to find joy in learning about science.

Dale was a vocal advocate for the importance of clean energy. In his personal life, he was proud of his beautiful, red Tesla (which he sometimes secretly drove in Sport mode when his wife wasn't watching), loved and meticulously maintained his solar panels, participated in the Electric Vehicle Drive Days, actively participated in the Sierra Club, and advocated for gov't changes that would reduce the human impact on climate change.

Dale was passionate about the importance of healthy eating and exercise. As a lifelong triathlete Dale strived to better himself, and his split times. He trained year round and competed ferociously. At 77 Dale was the terror of the senior triathlon circuit.

Family Directed Memorial Services will be held Saturday, May 11th at 11:00 at the Cedar Valley Unitarian Universalists Society, located at 3912 Cedar Heights Drive, Cedar Falls.

Events

MAY **Family Directed Memorial Service** 11:00AM

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Cedar Valley Unitarian Universalists

3912 Cedar Heights Drive, Cedar Falls, IA, US, 50613

Comments



“ I didn't ever have Dale as a professor, but I met him during my graduate school because of the national Sumo Robotics Competition that he began. I attended the event several years and then got to work with Dale as he directed 2 Ultimate Sumo Robotics Camps for high school students and then finally mentored some UNI undergraduates to continue the camp after his retirement. Dale had a way of helping a student discover their own strengths and abilities. He made every part of the process of building and programming a robot fun. He inspired so many students. Thank you Dale.

Marcy Seavey - May 14, 2019 at 11:16 AM



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Marcy Seavey - May 14, 2019 at 10:13 AM



“ I first met Dr. Olson when I attended UNI. In the spring of my freshman year (1977), I (along with a dozen other students) was most fortunate to be able to go with the UNI Physics Professors to the National Physics Convention in Chicago. Dr. Olson sure enjoyed taking students to that conference! Fast forward to 2017 when I began lap swimming. Dr. Olson became Dale to me. It was always enjoyable to say "hello" to Dale in the mornings. When our schedules allowed, we would even get a visit in when we were done swimming. I got to know Dale even better when I started to attend the CFU Trustee meetings in February. We both wanted the CFU Trustees to set a goal, with a date to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases produced. Dale regularly attended these monthly meetings and was on a first name basis with most of the trustees and with the CFU staff, I am going to miss Dale's smiling face and cheerful greetings!!!

Sue Green - May 10, 2019 at 10:17 PM



“ I swam with Dale for years, we shared our triathlon participation's. I teased him if his Tesla was dirty. I enjoyed his company at Peet swimming.

Carolmae Osborn - May 10, 2019 at 11:30 AM