

Kelly Grant Olson, age 78 of Perham, MN, passed away peacefully on Sunday, August 30 at Perham Living. He will be remembered for his devotion to Linda and their family, his years of railroad service, his love of lake life and travel, his steadfast faith, and the joy he found in music, reading, fishing, golfing, and time spent with his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchild.

Kelly was born on August 22, 1948 in Jamestown, ND to John and Wanda (Askew) Olson. He was raised in Jamestown, where he could proudly say he lived in a 25-room house—the Olson Hotel—which his parents owned and operated. Kelly attended school in Jamestown and graduated in 1966. Following graduation, he joined the U.S. Navy and served for three years stationed in the Philippines and throughout the Pacific. After his time in the service, Kelly returned to Jamestown and began working.

On January 30, 1971, Kelly married the love of his life, Linda Schuldheisz. This past winter, they celebrated 55 years of marriage and together, they raised three children: Cory, Jennifer, and Sara.

Kelly worked several jobs during his time in Jamestown before his family moved to Oakes, ND, in 1973. He worked for Bobcat in Gwinner, ND, and then for Schwan's Company in Oakes. In 1978, they moved back to Jamestown and Kelly went to work for Burlington Northern Railroad, joining other members of his family who had worked for the railroad. His dad was a conductor, his mom was a telegrapher, and his brother Jeff was an engineer. Kelly worked as a brakeman and conductor in Jamestown until 1994, when he and his family moved to Bismarck and he became an engineer. He continued driving trains until he retired in 2009. In 2011, he fulfilled his lifelong dream of living on a lake in Minnesota when he and Linda moved to Marion Lake, just outside Perham, MN. They lived there for 11 years, enjoying beautiful views, pontoon rides, and time spent entertaining friends and family. During retirement, Kelly also loved traveling and seeing new places with friends and family, especially cruises that took him to many places around the world. In 2022, Kelly and Linda moved into Perham, and in 2025, Kelly moved into Perham Living as his dementia progressed.

Kelly shared his favorite things with his family and friends. Every year, his grandchildren looked forward to their Christmas present from Grandpa, knowing it would be a “train book.” He carried on that tradition for all his grandchildren and his great-grandchild, beginning when his first granddaughter was born. He always made time to take his children and grandchildren fishing, tubing, and skiing at the lake. After he retired and had more time to golf, his family enjoyed a Father's Day golf “tournament” for many years. Kelly also shared his love of music from an early age. He sang in his high school choir, was a member of the Jamestown Chorales, and sang in the church choir. He was also a great backup singer to whoever was singing on the radio.

Kelly was preceded in death by his parents John and Wanda Olson; his brother, Jeff Olson; his aunt, Charlotte Olson; in-laws, Jacob and Magdalena Schuldheisz; and many other loving family members.

He is survived by his wife Linda of Perham, MN; his son Cory (Michelle) Olson of Detroit Lakes MN; daughter Jennifer (Sonny) Ranz of West Fargo ND; daughter Sara (Aaron) Brakke of Oxbow ND; sister, Linda (Ron) Davis of Polson, MT; grandchildren, Alyssa (Tallen) Keller, Ashley Olson, Alex Harwood, Cole Harwood, Cael Ranz, Sophie Brakke, Reed Ludwig, and Bridger Ranz; great-grandchild Hunter Keller; sisters-in-law, Shirley Unverferth, Rose Olson; many nieces and nephews, and other family members.

Celebrating THE *Life* OF



Kelly G. Olson
August 22, 1948- August 30, 2026



Memorial Service
Friday, September 11, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.
Calvary Lutheran Church
Perham, Minnesota

Officers
Pastor Eric Clapp
Pastor Erin Bovendam

Musician
Russ Bunker

Hymns
"Eternal Father, Strong to Save"
"It Is Well With My Soul"
"Lord, Listen To Your Children Praying"
"Life's Railway To Heaven"
"I'll Fly Away"

Readings
Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8
Matthew 11: 28-30
Psalms 23

Urn Bearers
Alyssa Keller Cael Ranz
Ashley Olson Sophie Brakke
Alex Harwood Reed Ludwig
Cole Harwood Bridger Ranz

Honorary Urn Bearers
The Calvary Fishermen

Private Family Burial
At a Later Date

Military Honors Provided by
Perham VFW - Dent American Legion
Navy Honor Guard



Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free
I'm following the path God laid for me.
I took His hand when I heard Him call
I turned my back and left it all
I could not stay another day
To laugh, to love, to work or play
Tasks left undone must stay that way
I found that peace at the close of the day
If my parting has left a void
Then fill it with remembered *Joy*
A friendship shared,
a laugh, a kiss Ah, yes, these things I too will miss
Be not burdened with times of sorrow
I wish for you the sunshine of tomorrow
My life has been full, I've savored much
Good friends, good times, *a loved one's touch*
Perhaps my time seemed all too brief
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief
Lift up your heart and share with me
God wanted me now, He set me **FREE!**