



Carl C. Spelts

December 10, 1918 - January 6, 2010

Carl C. Spelts, 91, of Kearney, died from complications of a stroke on Wednesday, January 6, at Good Samaritan Hospital. Carl was born December 10, 1918, in Tilden, Nebraska, to W.J. and Ruth Spelts. His maternal grandfather was John Borders, a deputy sheriff of Buffalo County. Before graduating from Atkinson (Neb.) High School in 1937, Carl lived in Elba, Niobrara, and Grand Island. After briefly living in Elm Creek, he enlisted in the U. S. Navy and served from 1938 to 1945 aboard the USS Vestal, USS Richmond, USS Spearfish, USS Skipjack, and USS Spot. He went to sea on 11 submarine patrols runs to sink Japanese ships and in September 1945 witnessed, through binoculars on a submarine tender, the signing of the final peace treaty that occurred on the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay. Carl advanced to the rank of Lieutenant Junior Grade. He married Georgia Warren, a home economics teacher, on May 14, 1944, in Denver, Colorado. She died in 1984. He married Edna Fleming Brown on November 29, 1986, in Kearney. She died in 1998. At the end of World War II, Carl returned to Nebraska and began a career in the retail lumber business that would span 43 years. He was a third generation Nebraska lumber dealer. His grandfather, father, one brother, and six Spelts uncles were all employed at various times, in different Nebraska towns, by Spelts Lumber Company. His uncle, R.E. Spelts of Grand Island, founded the company in 1946. Carl worked in the family's lumberyards in Grand Island, Loup City, and Litchfield. He moved to Kearney on January 1, 1952, and managed Spelts Lumber Company until retiring in

1988 as its president and owner. In 1955, Carl purchased a 5 minute advertising space, Monday through Friday, on KGFW Radio in Kearney. His friendly 7:55 a.m. taped broadcast soon attracted a large listening audience and many parents considered Carl's friendly greeting as an alarm clock of sorts for getting their children ready for school. The broadcasts continued for 33 consecutive years. Carl was also part owner of the John Deere Dealership, which was later named Spelts Swanson Implement Company. Carl's deep interest in Kearney's civic growth began in 1958 when he was elected president of the Kearney Chamber of Commerce and later served as state president of the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce. Nebraska Governor Victor Anderson (1955-1959) appointed Carl to a six year term on the State Normal Board, which was the governing body of four state colleges in Kearney, Chadron, Wayne, and Peru. The appointment was highly unusual since Carl had never attended college. He was an energetic and committed board member and remained active in college affairs until his death. Carl was presented the Kearney State College Distinguished Service Award and the KSC Foundation Founders Award. Carl's mastery of fundraising was noticed by many Kearney organizations. He never endorsed a civic fundraising effort unless it met the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct. He was chairman of the \$100,000 fund drive to establish the Nebraska Art Collection for Kearney; chairman of the \$365,000 fund drive to buy Kearney's old post office and convert it to the Museum of Nebraska Art (MONA); and chairman of the \$2.7 million fund drive for MONA expansion. Other activities included being a charter board member of the Kearney Area Community Foundation; chairman of Kearney's 125th Anniversary in 1998; charter member and past president of Kearney's Golden Kiwanis Club; a 42 year member of the Board of Directors at Platte Valley State Bank; and serving as an elected delegate to the 1972 Republican National Convention in Miami. Carl also held various leadership positions in the First Presbyterian Church in Kearney. He was preceded in death by one sister, Virginia Shaw, and two brothers, Jay and John. Carl is survived by one son, Mark (Vickie) Spelts of

Chico, California; three daughters, Marsha (Michael) Bolan of Brookfield, Wisconsin; Aneeta (Dean) Brown of Washington, Missouri; and Rhonda (Mark) Krom of Kalispell, Montana; eight grandchildren, Patrick Bolan, Oregon City, Oregon; Scott Bolan, Malibu, California; Kristin Bolan, Lima Peru; Samuel Brown, Washington, Missouri; Jeffrey Brown, Forest Park, Illinois; Jordan Ewing, Upland, California; Jennifer Mein, Phoenix, Arizona; Jacqueline Roth, Pasadena, California; and four great grandchildren, Jarrison Bolan and Kamryn Bolan of Oregon City, Oregon; Finnegan Bolan, Malibu, California; and Robert Mein, Phoenix, Arizona. Carl is also survived by three step children, Marlene (Jim) Hellman, and Gaylene (Dean) Aden, Dwayne ?Butch? (Margaret) Brown, all of Kearney; eight step grandchildren, Mark Hellman, Kearney; Ryan Hellman and J.J. Hellman, Denver, Colorado; Mindy Brummer, Trevor Aden, and Megan Mitchell, all of Kearney; Lori Schievelbein, Omaha; and Jenny Fellers, Parker, Colorado; and 20 step great grandchildren, Lacey Hellman, Austin Hellman, Dalton Hellman, Chelsea Richie, all of Kearney; Colton Hellman, Carson Hellman, Reagan Hellman, Grace Hellman, and Harrison Hellman, all of Denver; Aden Brummer, Ava Brummer, Ainsley Aden, Oliver Aden, Addison Mitchell, MaKinley Mitchell, all of Kearney; Hailee Schievelbein and Jaden Schievelbein, Omaha; Zacary Fellers, Sydney Fellers, and Maggie Fellers, Parker, Colorado; and one step great grandchild, Tristan Richie, Kearney. Visitation will be Friday, January 8 at Horner Lieske McBride & Kuhl Funeral and Cremation Services in Kearney from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Funeral services will be Saturday, January 9 at 10:00 a.m. at the First Presbyterian Church in Kearney, followed by burial with full military honors provided by the Kearney V.F.W. Post #759, American Legion Post #52 and the U.S. Navy Military Honors Team at the Kearney Cemetery. Carl Spelts suggested memorials to the Museum of Nebraska Art, Kearney Area Community Foundation, or the Georgia Warren Spelts Scholarship Fund at UNK. A message of condolence, tribute or memory can be left at www.hlmkfuneral.com. Horner Lieske McBride & Kuhl Funeral and

Cremation Services of Kearney are in charge of arrangements

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Tribute Wall



“ *Carl C. Spelts*

January 29, 2023 at 11:14 AM