

Paul Sejr Jorgensen

August 9, 1925 – January 25, 2017

Paul Jorgensen passed away peacefully in Northfield on January 25th at the age of 91. A caring, gentle, and kind man, Paul was known widely for his clever way with a joke and a big laugh. His marriage to Joann has been a constant source of love and joy for them both and an inspiration to those around them. He was the best Dad a kid could ask for, always loving, quick to help, generous with his time, involved in what they did, and supportive of their aspirations. To their children, he was a caring and attentive grandfather, present for important days and involved, even from a distance. His many students and colleagues remember him as an enthusiastic, hardworking, and dedicated teacher and mentor. Jorgy was a devoted friend to young and old, opening his home and heart to all.

Paul was born in 1925 to Reverend Ottar and Alma Jorgensen in Minneapolis, and raised there and in Cedar Falls, Iowa. In the closing years of World War II, after high school he joined the Navy Air Corps where he trained as a pilot and attended Duke University. After the war, Paul continued his education at Grand View College in Des Moines, Iowa, and completed his bachelor's degree at the University of Minnesota. He earned masters degrees in mathematics and education from the University of Colorado and the University of Wisconsin. Paul completed his doctorate at the University of Wisconsin in 1968. He began his career teaching mathematics at Northfield High School, traveled with friends on motorcycles through post-war Europe, and, in 1957, began teaching mathematics and teacher education at Carleton College in Northfield. During his 33-year career at Carleton, he served as Director of Summer Programs and Associate Dean of the College, and for a few years also taught math education courses at St. Olaf College. In 1987, he retired from Carleton College as Professor of Educational Studies and Mathematics.

Accompanying Paul throughout his life was his sweetheart, Joann. They met in Colorado in 1954, were married shortly thereafter in 1955, and lived together in Northfield for almost 62 years. He traveled with his family during sabbatical years in Denmark, California, Florida, and Georgia. After Paul's retirement, the two of them built a white pine log cabin on Deer Lake in northern Minnesota, where for almost thirty years they spent most summers. That cabin has been a treasured gathering spot for children and grandchildren summer after summer. In their retirement years, Paul and Joann also traveled extensively with friends and relatives to England and Scotland, Scandinavia, Iceland, Hawaii, Greece, Mexico, the Caribbean and many other destinations around the country. They spent many weeks visiting their children and grandchildren in Virginia, Washington, D.C., and Alaska. Paul and Joann built a large and close circle of friends in Northfield and at Deer Lake, and enjoyed many days and evenings together with them, sharing a meal, playing cards, and fishing and boating on Deer Lake. They have been unofficial grandparents to children in the neighborhood and beyond, making them a part of their extended family. Paul and Joann are devoted members of St. John's Lutheran Church; the church community has played a significant role in their life together.

Paul was active in the Northfield community as a member of the Lions Club and board member of the Friends of the Northfield Public Library. Paul was active in scouting, planning "Jorgy tours" to the Twin Cities and helping lead adventure backpacking and climbing trips to mountains in the west.

Paul is survived by his loving wife Joann; three children, Eric, David, and Anne; and 5 grandchildren, Kirsten, Peter, Erin, Kaia, and Thomas.

A memorial service will be held on February 18, 2017, at 2 PM with a reception to follow at St. John's Lutheran Church in Northfield. Memorial gifts may be made to St. John's Lutheran Church, Friends of the Northfield Public Library, or the Paul S. Jorgensen Memorial Fund at Carleton College.