



Vernon Russell Sunset

July 3, 1929 - September 5, 2023

Vernon R. Sunset, 94, of Fort Collins, passed away on September 5, 2023. Predeceased by parents Ingvard and Gena Sunset, sisters Iris Sunset and Leila Terry, and brother Allen Sunset.

Born and raised in Roseau, MN, Vern was a member of his high school glee club, yearbook, student affairs, letterman's club and was a prolific athlete. He once won a District track meet by himself, scoring more individual points than any other school in the meet. He competed in the 100-yard, relay, discus, high jump, long jump and set a pole vault record that stood for many years. In 1946, his small-town team won the MN State Basketball Championship.

In 1951, Vern enlisted in the Air Force and served for four years during the Korean War based in Geneva, NY and Wimpole Park, England. He trained as a medic and was later assigned to the dental service. He was honorably discharged in 1955 at the rank of Staff Sergeant.

After the war, Vern earned a Bachelor of Science - Education from the University of Minnesota. A chance encounter introduced him to a nursing student who would become his wife of 66 years, Joanne. For the first twelve years of his career, Vern taught high school Special Education, Industrial Arts, Photography, Graphic Arts and Electronics classes in Dolton, IL and Hopkins, MN. After starting a family, he finished his Master of Science - Education and Visual and Applied Arts at Minnesota State University - Mankato.

In 1971, the family headed West to Fort Collins, CO where he spent his career as a general contractor building over 500 homes and commercial buildings in Northern Colorado. Vern was an elected official and served on the Board of Directors of East Larimer County Water District (ELCO) for 38 years. He also served on the Larimer County Planning Commission for 15 years, as well as several other county boards and commissions throughout his career. Lifetime CSU Volleyball fans, in 1985, the Sunsets founded the first competitive youth volleyball program in Northern Colorado which is now NORCO Volleyball. In his spare time, he was an avid woodworker and artist, creating an array of modern and beautiful sculptures and jewelry with an eye towards simple lines and basic forms in nature.

Vern valued education, music, cars, tools, gadgets, and most of all, his family. Sentimental, artistic, creative, musical and funny, Vern was abundantly proud of his family and was loved by those he leaves behind: his lovely wife Joanne; his children Greg (Cindy) Sunset, Darren (Terri) Sunset, Andrea Sunset (Brian) Weslar; his grandchildren Lindsay and Zac (Jamie) Sunset, Scott, Tim and Ben Sunset, Ethan and Maia Weslar; and many special nieces and nephews across CO, MN and FL. He will be laid to rest at Trinity Lutheran Church in Fort Collins. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made in his name to Food Bank for Larimer County at Food Bank Larimer County Donations.