

Obituary of William Andreas Olson

7/1/1923-11/8/2018

William Andreas Olson, former City Attorney of the City of Houston and founder of the Houston law firm Olson & Olson LLP, died peacefully in Normandy Park, Washington, on November 8, 2018. He was 95 years of age.

Mr. Olson was born July 1, 1923, in Waco, Texas. He attended public schools in Waco, but his college education was suspended while he served in the United States Army during World War II. He achieved the rank of Captain by the age of twenty, was a Battery Commander in the Field Artillery and was deployed in combat for two and one-half years in North Africa and Italy. Following the war he attended Baylor University and Baylor Law School, from which he graduated in 1950. In 1959, Mr. Olson became the first general counsel of the Texas Municipal League in Austin. After serving in that capacity for four years, he was in private practice for a brief period before his appointment as City Attorney for the City of Houston. He served in that position from 1966 until 1974. After leaving the City he again entered private practice, which evolved into the formation of Olson & Olson LLP, one of the preeminent law firms in the State of Texas specializing in municipal law. Mr. Olson's representation of cities and city officials throughout the State, both as general counsel and as a litigator of issues relating to virtually every facet of local government, made him one of the most recognized authorities in the field of municipal law. Of his many accomplishments, the one for which he was most proud was the representation, along with his brother Lyndon, of Hank Avery in the landmark case of Avery v Midland County. This case, ultimately decided by the United States Supreme Court, extended the constitutional rule of "one-man, one vote" to local governments. In addition to his professional achievements, Mr. Olson served as general counsel of the Texas City Attorneys Association, Chair of the Public Utility Law Section of the State Bar of Texas, member of the Advisory Board of the Center for Municipal Studies of the Southwestern Legal Institute, Chair of the Committee on Water and Water Resources of the National Institute of Law Officers, member of the Texas Constitution Committee and the Committee on Coordination With Other Legal Organizations of the State Bar of Texas, President of the Texas City Attorneys Association, member of the Board of Directors of the Texas Municipal League, and sat on multiple committees and boards of various organizations throughout the State. During his career he wrote numerous articles and publications, and was a frequent speaker on a wide variety of subjects in the field of municipal law.

Mr. Olson is survived by his loving and devoted wife, Anita M. Olson, of Normandy Park, Washington, children Suzanne O. Waldrep of Waco, Texas, William A. Olson, Jr., and wife Sandy, of Horseshoe Bay, Texas, John F. Olson and wife Karen, of Pine, Colorado, Judy O. Dell'Osso and husband Mario, of Crockett, Texas, grandchildren Deborah Acker and husband Rod, of The Woodlands, Texas, Caroline O. Ford and husband Jason, of Waco, Texas, David W. Olson and wife Kaela, of Houston, Texas, Brian J. Olson and wife Lane, of Dallas, Texas, Dr. Jennifer R. Kubista and husband Dr. Richard Kubista, of Golden, Colorado, John F. Olson, Jr., and wife Alyssa, of Littleton, Colorado, David A. Dell'Osso and wife Kathryn, of Austin, Texas, John P. Dell'Osso and wife Naabia, of Washington, D.C., fifteen great grandchildren, two great-great grandchildren, and nephews Lyndon L. Olson, Jr., and wife Kay, of Waco, Texas, and Charles D. Olson and wife Kris, of Waco, Texas. Mr. Olson is also survived by extended family members Michele M. Heller and husband Steve, of Lopez Island, Washington, Diane Brissenden and husband Stephen, of Normandy Park, Washington, Ronald W. Cook and wife Lynne, of Dallas, Texas, five grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Mr. Olson was preceded in death by his parents, Col. Ernest A. Olson and Beth Fuller Olson, brothers Fuller Olson and Lyndon L. Olson, sister-in-law Frances M. Olson, son-in-law Larry S. Waldrep, and his beloved wife of 66 years, Virginia M. Olson.

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A graveside Memorial Service will be held at 2:00 PM, Saturday, December 8, 2018, at Memorial Oaks Cemetery, 13001 Katy Freeway, Houston, Texas. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the American Heart Association, American Cancer Society, Franciscan Hospice and Palliative Care (University Place, Washington) or other charity of choice.