



Gerald Ernest Carlson

November 12, 1938 - October 3, 2025

Gerald Ernest Carlson, lovingly known as “Jerry,” passed away peacefully on October 3, 2025, at the age of 86 at Elk Ridge Assisted Living in Elkhorn, Nebraska. A man of faith, resilience, and unwavering dedication to family and community, Jerry lived a remarkable life rooted in the values of hard work, integrity, and devotion to Christ.

Memorial services will take place Friday, October 17, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. at Northwest Christian Church in Alta, Iowa. Visitation will be held from 9-10:30 a.m. prior to the service at the CHURCH. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials be made to Northwest Christian Church, Alta, Iowa, in honor of Jerry’s legacy of faith and service. The Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home in Storm Lake is in charge of the arrangements.

Born in 1938 in Storm Lake, Iowa, Jerry’s life began with a challenge—arriving with the umbilical cord around his neck. The decision to deliver him in the hospital rather than at home proved lifesaving. His early years were spent on a farm near Pomeroy, Iowa, in a home without electricity or plumbing. At a one-room schoolhouse, he peaked at second in his class—he would note, “the other gal was really smart.”

In 1949, the family relocated to Albert City, Iowa, where Jerry began fourth grade. There, across the classroom, sat Elaine, a witty farm girl who would become his lifelong partner. Jerry’s father, Ernest, treated him as a partner from a young age, instilling a strong work ethic and ethical business principles. By age 15, Jerry’s passion for livestock led him to persuade a broker to enter the trade, with his mother driving him across the state to seal the deal. A tragic car accident involving his parents at age 16 thrust Jerry into full responsibility for the family farm and livestock, a role he embraced with determination.

On April 2, 1960, Jerry married Elaine, and together they built a life centered on family and faith and were blessed with two children. In 1963, Jerry purchased a stockyard facility in Storm Lake, later expanding to a larger operation in Alta. Over his career, he operated across 26 states, Canada, and Mexico, serving over 1,500 customers and trading more than 2 million sheep. His business acumen and integrity earned him respect far and wide.

Jerry's unyielding faith in Christ was the cornerstone of his life. A co-founder of the Alta Church of Christ, he also served on the board of Nebraska Christian College and supported numerous Christian organizations. Jerry's quiet strength and frequent calls to prayer inspired those around him. His testimony was made by example and not words.

Jerry is survived by his beloved wife, Elaine of Elkhorn, NE; daughter, Jody (Terry) O'Doherty of Omaha, NE; son, Todd (Jill) Carlson of Rochester Hills, MI; four grandchildren, Kyle (Kyla) O'Doherty, Ryne (Ashley) O'Doherty, Jordan (Allison) Carlson, and Hayley (Raymond) Pow; five great-grandchildren, Kayden, Lynk, Kamden, Lorilyn, and Karter. Other dear survivors include: sister, LaVonne Moline of Owasso, OK; sister-in-law, Joan Phillips of Manning, IA and many cherished nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Ernest and Mayme Carlson, father-in-law and mother-in-law, Wayne and Edna Martin; brother-in-law, Dwayne Moline; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law; Marion and Norene Martin; Dale and Joan Martin; Gilbert Phillips and Joyce Hoskins.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials be made to Northwest Christian Church, Alta, Iowa, in honor of Jerry's legacy of faith and service.

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT 17. 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

Northwest Christian Church
505 West Highway 7
Alta, IA 51002

Memorial Service

OCT 17. 10:30 AM (CT)

Northwest Christian Church
505 West Highway 7
Alta, IA 51002

Tribute Wall

EM

“ Our deepest condolences to the family. Jerry’s legacy and investment in others has made a great impact in many lives. We wouldn’t be where we are today without him. He will be missed by many, but his love, support, and hard work will live on through those who knew him & those he invested in.
May you be comforted knowing he is with his Heavenly Father.

With love and sympathy,

Erin & David Moline



Erin Moline - October 18, 2025 at 04:33 PM

MD

“ Dave and I so enjoyed having Elaine and Gerry as neighbors on 6th Street in SL. My deepest sympathy to you and your family.
Mary Drey

Mary Drey - October 17, 2025 at 08:59 AM

CZ

“ Cory Z. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gerald Ernest Carlson.

Cory Z. - October 16, 2025 at 09:50 PM

FH

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home - October 16, 2025 at 03:02 PM

LF

“ Larry and Joanne Hanson & family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Gerald Ernest Carlson.



Larry and Joanne Hanson & family - October 16, 2025 at 11:38 AM

JD

“ John/Connie Demers lit a candle in memory of Gerald Carlson



John/Connie Demers - October 12, 2025 at 08:37 PM

RM

“ Randy and Mona Mason lit a candle in memory of Gerald Carlson



Randy and Mona Mason - October 10, 2025 at 12:46 PM

DD

“ Dirk & Judy Dierkhising planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gerald Ernest Carlson.

Dirk & Judy Dierkhising - October 10, 2025 at 11:09 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gerald Ernest Carlson.



October 10, 2025 at 11:09 AM

LS

“ *Les Stern purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Gerald Ernest Carlson.*



Les Stern - October 09, 2025 at 04:19 PM

RR

“ *Rich Robinson lit a candle in memory of Gerald Carlson*



Rich Robinson - October 09, 2025 at 11:08 AM

LO

“ *Jerry was a close neighbor and good friend living a short two miles away. We often rode bikes to a nearby creek to catch minnows. One summer Jerry gave me rides on a small motor scooter sometimes allowing me to drive. We shared many good times growing up. I was honored to be his friend.*

Larry Olson - October 07, 2025 at 10:28 PM



“ *Heavenly Grace Spray was purchased for the family of Gerald Ernest Carlson.*



October 07, 2025 at 02:08 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gerald Ernest Carlson.*

October 07, 2025 at 02:08 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gerald Ernest Carlson.*

October 06, 2025 at 07:57 AM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Gerald Ernest Carlson.



October 06, 2025 at 07:57 AM



“ Pam Henderson lit a candle in memory of Gerald Carlson



Pam Henderson - October 05, 2025 at 10:40 AM