



Jim in his orchard



We will see him each spring in the blossoms

James Rodney Olin, was born 4/28/25 in Kansas City, Kansas. He served in the Army upon completion of his high school education. He entered the army and served in the Infantry 13th Armored Division from 1943-1946. He received the Combat Infantry badge, bronze star and five battle stars. He then served as a Lieutenant in the Veterinary Corp during the Korean War from 1950-1953. He also served in the USAFR from 1953-1968. He retired at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

After WWII he attended Kansas State University and received his Doctrine in Veterinary Medicine in the year 1950. Jim married his loving wife, Marilyn of 54 years in 1952. He joined the staff at Fiest Animal Hospital in 1953 and purchased the practice in 1954. Their son, David James, was born on January 23, 1959. His first granddaughter, Carly Marie, was born on February 11, 1989 followed by granddaughter, Renee Elise, born on July 1, 1992. He practiced veterinarian medicine until his stroke in 1994.

Jim was the president and board member of the Minnesota Board of Veterinarian Examiners, member of the AVMA, President of the Small Animal Hospital Association, President of the Ramsey County Humane Society, President of the St. Paul Rotary from 1978-1979, District Governor of Rotary International, President of Immanuel Lutheran Church congregation, Board member of the Board of Advisors for the St. Paul Salvation Army, Board member of the Town and Country Bank, member of the St. Paul Athletic Club, VFW Post 1350 and the American Legion. Jim and Marilyn have been members at Augustana Lutheran Church for many years and Jim has always been steadfast in his faith, hosting bible studies in his home until he went to live at the Minnesota Veterans Home. Jim loved to sail, travel worldwide and grow apples in his orchard at his home of 35 years in Mendota Heights. Jim and Marilyn hosted many foreign visitors in their home.

Lt. Col./Dr. James Olin is survived by loving wife Marilyn Karen Olin, son David James Olin, daughter-in-law Joan Olin and granddaughters Carly Marie and Renee Elise, sister Elizabeth Mann, sisters-in-law Laurean Zampino, Betty Young, Pat Young and Zarida Young, brothers-in-law Richard Young and Robert Mann, special friends Meg Gelbmann and Jerry Strelow and loved by many friends. Jim is preceded in death by his father Gustav, his mother Ruth, his brother Ralph, and sister Ruth Marie Smith.

Memorials are preferred to Ramsey County Humane Society or Augustana Lutheran Church.

REMEMBERING JAMES R. OLIN, 80

Veterinarian was gentle caregiver

BY PRATIK JOSHI

Pioneer Press

For about 40 years, veterinarian James R. Olin worked wonders with pets in St. Paul.

He could talk to animals and make them feel better, said Dr. Sam Hunter, a heart surgeon who became friends with Olin after the vet began taking care of his German shepherd in the 1960s. "There was a magic about him."

Olin, a decorated veteran and longtime Mendota Heights resident, died April 15 of natural causes at age 80.

He was training to become an engineer as a young Army recruit during World War II but knew he wanted to work with animals, said



**James R.
Olin**

his wife, Marilyn Olin. So, at the end of the war, he headed back to his home state of Kansas to study veterinary medicine.

He rejoined the U.S. Army as a member of the Veterinary Corps at Fort Snelling in 1950, the year he completed his veterinary studies. He quit the service in 1953 to work with Arnold Feist, then one of only a few St. Paul veterinarians. A year later, he bought Feist's hospital.

His specialty was small animals, but he treated all kinds of sick animals, including a tiger from the Como Zoo, his wife said.

Earlier in his career, Olin treated dogs and cats that were hit by cars and became an expert in fixing broken bones, she said, adding that he always was on call.

"He was tall and big, yet so gentle," and he felt for both the animals and the owners, she said. He would put his arm around grieving pet owners and console them about their injured or dead pet.

His other interest was community service, Hunter said. Olin was involved with the St. Paul Rotary Club, the Salvation Army Advisory Board and the Humane Society for Companion Animals. He donated time to perform surgeries on small animals for the group until he had a stroke in 1994, his wife said.

Olin loved talking about his years in the Army and "would tell a good story," Hunter said.

In addition to his wife of 54 years, survivors include his son David of Mendota Heights and two granddaughters.

Services were Thursday at Augustana Lutheran Church in West St. Paul.