



Gerald Benson

November 3, 1914 - July 8, 2011

Gerald (Gerry) Philip Benson, 96, passed away peacefully on Friday July 8th, surrounded by family at his home. Gerry was born on November 3, 1914 in Cottonwood County, MN to Petra and Ben Benson. He was the fifth of six children. Gerry graduated from Lamberton High School in 1932 and went on to Augsburg College where he received his degree in Biology and History in 1939. He served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps in World War II and received a Bronze Star and other medals. He received his Master's in Educational Psychology, Counseling and Guidance from the University of Minnesota in 1949 and his Doctorate in Education from the University of Colorado in 1956. Gerry's dogged determination to get an education during the years of the Great Depression was remarkable. For example, as a youngster he and his next older brother, Stan, worked from 4:30 to 8:30 a.m. for a dairy farmer milking cows and delivering milk, then went to a full day of school, then came back to milk cows for four more hours before dinner at 8:30 p.m. Sometimes he was so tired he fell asleep at the table. This sort of work schedule was characteristic of Dr. Benson's educational years throughout high school, college and graduate school. He continued his pattern of hard work and dedication throughout his life. Dr. Benson's educational career began as a teacher in a one-room school, then a high school teacher and principal. He taught at Western State College in Gunnison from 1949-1959 and at Colorado State University from 1959-1982. His classes at CSU were very popular and he taught up to 900 students a year. Countless students recognized the

unobtrusive and unselfish guidance Dr. Benson gave to each of them, and many acknowledged the outstanding influence he played in their academic awakening. He continued to keep up with research in psychology and education even after he retired and was a frequent contributor of "Soapboxes" for the Ft. Collins Coloradoan up until the end of his life. Gerry was also a major contributor to the life of the Ft. Collins community. He was a founder of Foothills Gateway Rehabilitation Center in addition to its predecessor, and was involved with them for 24 years. He spent countless hours as a volunteer for the Poudre R-1 school district and helped start their Head Start program. He was one of the founders of Ft. Collins Read Aloud, promoting early childhood literacy. He was a very active supporter of Trinity Lutheran Church and with the Sons of Norway. Gerry met the love of his life, Gladys Irene Berg, at Augsburg College. They were married on March 28, 1942 in Minneapolis, MN. They moved to Gunnison, CO in 1949 and then relocated to Ft. Collins, CO in 1959. They had three children, Janet Manning (Robert), Katherine and Philip. They had six grandchildren, Becky, Rob, Heather, Kate, Sage and David, as well as five great-grandchildren. Gerry was preceded in death by his wife, Gladys; his five siblings, Mae, Hamar, David, Stan and Richard; and one grandson, Jeremy. Services will be held on Tuesday July 12th at 10:30 a.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church, 301 E. Stuart St., Ft. Collins. A reception will immediately follow. In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Trinity Lutheran Church, Foothills Gateway Rehabilitation Center, or Reach Out and Read Colorado.

Tribute Wall



“ *Gerald Benson*

October 25, 2022 at 06:14 PM



“ *Dr. & Mrs. Benson were our neighbors in Golden Meadows. I was also their letter carrier in the 80s and 90s. Dr. Benson would always stop at the mailbox and chat or share a pearl of wisdom. He was a wonderful man.*

Wendell Frey - July 08, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ *Gerry was a gentle giant and unassuming man with a great deal of wisdom. I will always have fond memories of being his colleague and listening to him speak. He was always very kind to me as a young assistant professor and was very affirming during the course of my career. Truly, a marvelous man who touched many many people. It doesn't get a whole lot better than the life he lived and the scores of people he touched.*

Larry Bloom - July 08, 2011 at 12:00 AM

BM

“ I had the pleasure of talking to Gerald Benson several times when I was on the FCRA board of directors.

His newspaper letters to the editor were always pertinent and to the point, which was/still is: education, education, education.

This thoughtful man's contributions to the community will indeed be missed.

Much love to you, his people.

Brenda Rader Mross - July 08, 2011 at 12:00 AM