

Rufus Olson, Tribune Editor, Died Suddenly



Rufus Olson, editor of the Pilot-Tribune for the past nine years and a long-time Blair resident, died early Thursday morning at Memorial Community Hospital in Blair. Death was attributed to a heart attack.

Although he had been in the newspaper business for the past fifteen years, he was best known about the state for his interest in sports, particularly football and basketball. He had a wide acquaintance with coaches and sports writers and served as counsel and advisor for many coaches in this immediate area.

Rufus was born at Eagle Grove, Iowa, February 3, 1906 and was 61 years of age at the time of his death. He attended high school at Brycelyn, Minnesota and graduated from St. Olaf College, at Northfield, Minnesota in 1931.

He always had an avid interest in sports and he became Freshman coach at St. Olaf for the 1931-32 school year. The following year he came to Dana College as coach and remained in that position for ten years, until 1942. During that time he coached a championship Dana College football team and directed basketball teams which brought honor to Dana.

For a brief period he was in the Food Store business at Grant, Nebraska, but returned to Blair to enter the newspaper business.

He filled the post of Associate Editor on the Pilot-Tribune with the late Reed O'Hanlon, Jr., and joined The Enterprise organization when the Tribune was merged with The Enterprise in 1958.

Two years ago he suffered a heart ailment which hospitalized him for a time but he recovered and had carried on his work without interruption after his period of hospitalization.

Rufus filled many civic posts in the community. As a member of the Chamber of Commerce he held positions on the Board of Directors, then as Vice President and finally as President. He was a charter member of the Blair Lions Club and at one time was a member of the Board of Directors. He was a charter member of the Nebraska-Iowa Officials Association and served the county as Red

erans Field Committee. During that time he planned a Slave Sale, sponsored by the Blair Lions Club which raised funds to purchase an electric score clock for Veterans Field.

For a time he was a member of the Board of Trustees of Dana College, filling the term of Philip Magnussen who moved from Blair to Colorado.

He filled a two-year term on the Blair Planning Commission.

He conceived and organized the first and only football jamboree ever held in Nebraska. It took place on the Blair field with eight schools participating and it was followed by sportswriters and coaches all over the mid-west.

For two years he officiated at the state basketball tournament.

In 1965, he planned and carried out a Gregg McBride Appreciation Night, in honor of the World Herald Sports Writer who was planning retirement. It was a great success.

For a number of years he has been a member of the Washington County Agricultural Society which operates the Washington County Fair. He had made a number of trips to Arlington earlier this week to direct affairs at the three-day show which ended the evening before his death.

He is survived by his wife, Ruth, who is a member of the Blair City Schools faculty and by two daughters, Mrs. Howard Johnson (Marilyn) of Portland, Oregon, and Mrs. Reynolds Kubie (Patricia) of Blair. Also surviving is his mother, Mrs. Edith Olson, and a sister, Mrs. Jerone Oldberg, both of Northfield, Minnesota. There are four grandchildren.

Funeral services for Mr. Olson were held Saturday afternoon at the First Lutheran Church, the Rev. George Palleson conducting the services. Burial under the direction of the Campbell Mortuary was made in the Blair cemetery.

Pallbearers were all long-time friends who shared his keen interest in athletics. They were Jerry Rainforth, Harold McKercher, Richard Zimmerman, Anchor (Buck) Sorensen,