



SGT MAJ Arthur Lee Olson

MAY 17, 1948 - JAN 24, 2025



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SGT MAJ Arthur Lee Olson

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SGT MAJ Arthur Lee Olson was born May 17, 1948 in Delta, Utah, son of Arthur L. Olson and Ileen Paice Olson Harris. (Dad, himself, would say he was “born at a young age”.) He spent his early years in Oak City. He was the oldest of 7 children, with 3 brothers and 3 sisters (Kristie, Scott, Gary, Ed, Nancy, Julie).

When he was 6, they moved to Provo, UT. He attended schools in Provo and graduated from Provo High School with a letter in track. As a teenager, he met his future wife, Margene “Maggie” Riggs. They were high school sweethearts and later married in 1970.

He attended BYU until “Uncle Sam wanted him in the military”. He enlisted in the military to avoid being drafted. Enlistment gave him the option to become a linguist. He spent 47 weeks in El Paso, TX learning Vietnamese. After security training, he spent 8.5 months in Vietnam. The water in Vietnam was unsafe so the soldiers drank a lot of Coca-Cola. By the time his tour in Vietnam was up, Art never wanted to drink Coke again and switched to Pepsi, “the nectar of the Gods”, and his life-long addiction was born. After Vietnam, they lived in Fort Meade, Maryland until he had finished his enlistment.

He learned to work hard doing construction with his father. As a young man, he wanted his own space at home and solved the problem by taking a bucket and a shovel and digging a partial basement under his parents’ home. He worked with his hands throughout his life, always repairing the family cars or starting various home projects. He got his Associates of Science degree in Electrical Technology. He worked on electrical systems for various companies until 1986 when he returned to the military full-time. He believed education was important and wanted to set an example for his children and grandchildren, so later in life he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts, cum laude.

He spent 38 years in the military, mostly serving full-time in the Utah National Guard. He greatly enjoyed the camaraderie of the soldiers he served with and some of them remain his closest friends.



Obituary

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It has been said that Art was a man of many words. If you knew him, then you understand. He had a lifelong love of animals, especially dogs, racing pigeons, aquarium fish, and chameleons. He was an avid reader and was rarely more than arm's length from a novel. He loved a good story and always had a joke ready. He loved playing basketball and volleyball, both at church and as "PT" at work. He had a remarkably detailed memory. He made friends easily and was incredibly loyal to all that he considered his friends. His kids will say that anywhere they went with Dad, even across the country, he would run into someone that he knew and whose name he remembered.

He was active in the LDS church and served his mission in the Cook Islands where he learned Cook Islands Māori.

He is survived by his wife of 54 years, his 5 children: Matthew (Clarissa), Lori, Brian (Paige), Lindsay (Aaron Larsen); and Caleb (Marshall), 16 grandchildren, and his 6 siblings.

He was preceded in death by his father, Arthur L.; his mother, Ileen; his step-father, Keith; and his grandson, Zane Smith.

Services will be held on Friday, January 31, 2025 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Chapel at 1250 East 200 South in Pleasant Grove, UT. A viewing service will be from 9 AM to 10:30 AM with the funeral service at 11 AM. Internment will be in the Orem City Cemetery.



Events

SGT MAJ Arthur Lee Olson

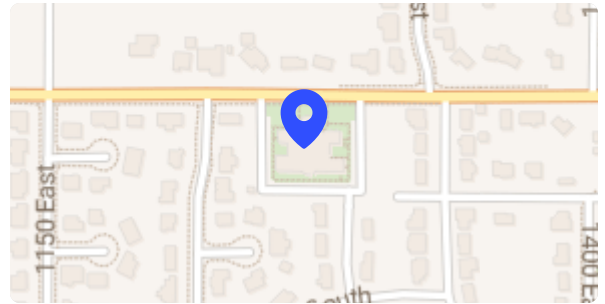
MAY 17, 1948 - JAN 24, 2025

Viewing

Friday, January 31, 2025

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM MT

LDS Church
1250 East 200 South , Pleasant Grove UT

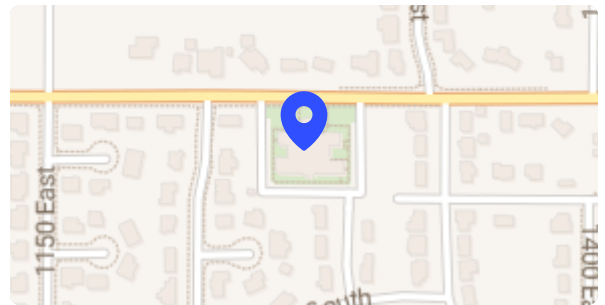


Funeral

Friday, January 31, 2025

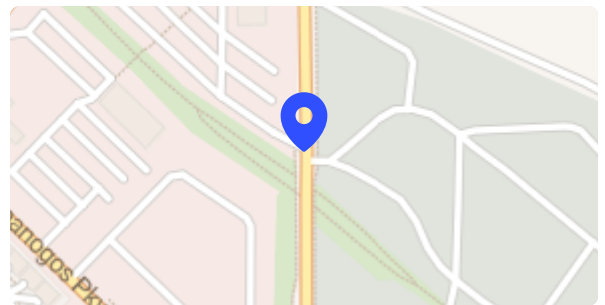
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM MT

LDS Church
1250 East 200 South , Pleasant Grove UT



Cemetery Details

Orem City Cemetery
1520 North 800 East, Orem UT 84058





Tribute Wall

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LG

Ltc D.J. Gibb posted:

Art was a great man. He was my first Senior NCO Mentor in the Utah National Guard and never failed to check in with me as I progressed through my career. I'm going to miss him.

February 1 at 5:09 AM

DB

Dennis Brimhall posted:

Grew up in Provo just a few blocks away from each other, served in New Zealand together, Art was in the Cook Islands. Years later we connected when he was in PG and I working in SLC. Arohanui, Brother

January 31 at 4:41 PM

ST

Steve February 6 at 12:10 PM

I sent you a text. Steve Suter

1S

1Sg (Ret) Ray Sanchez posted:

Art was a mentor and friend to me for the better part of my time in the MI. He was one of the people on my selection board to the 142nd MI in 1990, where I would spend 14 years of my career. He and I had a love for basketball and would play numerous games together over the years. We would badger each other about our college football teams (BYU/Notre Dame) with tongue in cheek respect. He often spoke of his love for his family, and would tell me about his kids accomplishments. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family. RIP brother! Ray Sanchez

January 30 at 6:40 PM

BS

Brian Schiele posted:

I remember meeting a then MSG Art Olson back when I first started a full time position in the G1 at the Utah National Guard. We went our separate ways upon retirement, but remained connected through Facebook and followed his cancer journey. SSG (RET) Brian Schiele

January 30 at 12:01 PM

RU

Russell posted:

SGM Arthur Olson is one the best! Until we meet again my friend. CW4 Russell Johnson

January 28 at 7:38 AM



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Frank Hones posted:

I met Art in November 1970 at the Defense Language Institute Southwest at Ft Bliss TX. We were Army PFCs assigned as students learning North Vietnamese language. Following graduation, we spent 3 months at Goodfellow AFB, and then on to Vietnam. We both served at Hue Phu Bai. In recent years, my wife and I would vacation in Palm Springs CA each March. Our flight from Michigan would have a layover in Salt Lake City so I would call Art to catch up. Art was a great guy and I feel honored to have been his friend. Rest In Peace, Ong Horse!.....Frank Hones

January 27 at 5:02 AM



Steve February 6 at 12:11 PM

Thanks, Frank!



Joan K Howell posted:

One of the best missionaries at the Employment Resource Center for many years doing AJS at 8:00 a.m. every morning. An example and a success story to be sure. We all loved him. Joan Howell

January 25 at 7:39 PM



Ernie Potter posted:

We were together studying Vietnamese language together in that hotbed of Bietnamese culture, El Paso, Texas. Art was quick with a funny story and always had a smile on his face. He's my fellow Vietnam vet, my friend, and my brother. I'm so thankful that I had the chance to talk to him once a month for the past few months, and he never lost his sense of humor. I miss and love ya, Art!

January 25 at 2:48 PM



Steve February 6 at 12:12 PM

Thanks, Ernie!



Jeffrey B Turner posted:

I have had the blessing of knowing Art and Maggie for over 30 years. The stories Art can tell! I know he loved his God, Wife and country. I along with Dave Thomas have had the privilege of being their ministering brothers the past several years. My love goes out to Maggie and their children, knowing this is just the beginning of eternity! Love Jeffrey Turner

January 25 at 2:09 AM



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SM

Spc Andrew Morkel posted:

I served in the Army National Guard with SGM Olsen. I was grateful for his kindness and friendship. Please accept my Heartfelt condolences.

January 24 at 8:08 PM

TO

Todd posted:

Art was my friend! We started that friendship back in 1985 in Nephi with Det1 1457th Engr BN with "Good Old Sergeant Park". Our friendship lasted and will continue. Art was one of a kind, I will miss him and cherish such good memories we shared and the good times and the laughs we had over the years. Thank you Maggie for sharing him with me!

January 24 at 2:45 PM

WS

William R. Spencer posted:

God Bless You Brother

January 24 at 2:34 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Arthur by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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