

Palmer Lawrence Larson

July 7, 1918 – June 28, 2016

Palmer Lawrence Larson, 97, of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, passed away peacefully at his residence on Tuesday, June 28, 2016, surrounded by family and friends.

Palmer was born July 7, 1918, in Summit, South Dakota, to Nels and Selma Larson. The second youngest of 12 children, he grew up on his family's farm. He began attending the South Dakota School for the Deaf in 1925 and graduated in 1940. After graduation, he farmed with his brother, Alfred.



Palmer met Emma Isaak at a convention in Bismarck, North Dakota. They were married October 22, 1948, in Watertown, South Dakota. The couple farmed near Summit and later near Parker before moving to Sioux Falls in 1952. They had one daughter, Celia. Emma preceded him in death on February 12, 1998.

Softball was an important part of Palmer's life from childhood onward. He played first base and served as a part-time pitcher in the YMCA's Indian League, receiving All-Star honors from SDSD and the YMCA league. He also continued playing softball with the Midwest Association of the Deaf for four years. He was recognized as a Hall of Fame inductee in 2008.



Palmer worked as a custodian at the South Dakota School for the Deaf for seven years and in janitorial maintenance at Augustana College, now Augustana University, for 32 years, retiring in 1983.

He remained active in the deaf community throughout his life. He was a member of the South Dakota Association of the Deaf for 55 years and Deaf Seniors of South Dakota for more than 20 years. He also belonged to the Sioux Falls Association of the Deaf and the National Fraternal Society of the Deaf, Division No. 74, and served as an officer of Chat N' Nibble for a couple of years.

Palmer contributed his time and skills to renovations of the SDAD/CSD building on Gateway Lane and the Sioux Falls Association of the Deaf clubhouse on Lewis Avenue. He was also a member of East Side Lutheran Church for more than 20 years.

He is survived by his daughter, Celia Doolittle; five grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild; and other loving family members and friends.

Graveside services were held on July 2, 2016, at Hills of Rest Cemetery in Sioux Falls, with Pastor Nix officiating. Family and friends gathered afterward for lunch and fellowship at Christ Lutheran Church. Miller Funeral Home assisted with the arrangements.