Sydney Glen Vollmin

APRIL 11, 2022

VOLLMIN, Sydney Glen

November 3, 1927 – April 11, 2022

Sydney Glen Vollmin passed away quietly surrounded by family on Monday, April 11, 2022 at the age of 94.

Syd is survived by Kay, his wife of 69 years; his children, Wendy (Teresa Trimble), Connie (Larry Nielsen), Stephen, Paul (Lorna) and Deanna (Jim Neufeld); 8 grandchildren, 7 great- grandchildren and a large extended family. He is also survived by sister-in-law, Marie Corless (Roy). He was predeceased by his parents, Frida and Julius; all his brothers and their spouses, Lesley, Charlie (Verla), Ross (June), Chester (Florence) and Bob(Maureen); in-laws, Roy Corless and Jack & Louise Corless.

Syd was born the youngest of a family of 6 boys, in the town of Drumheller, to Frida and Julius. They were both immigrants; Julius from Switzerland and Frida a 2nd generation American from Norway. Although his birth records were subsequently lost in a fire, his mother kept a family bible record. Before his first birthday he lost his father and his brother, Leslie to a typhoid outbreak. Subsequently, his mother took her 5 little boys to Sundre where there was some family support.

Syd eventually attended the one room schoolhouse on McDougal Flats. He enjoyed neighborhood baseball, hunting and motorcycles. The latter interest found him in an accident which involved a hospital stay and a pinned broken leg. He had a slight limp his whole life. He grew up with a mother who had a deep faith and a gift of hospitality. He was surrounded by a raucous group of brothers, aunts, uncles and community. Even though times were hard, he grew up with faith, laughter, music, and a hard-work-ethic.

Syd left school at the age of 14 to begin his working career in the logging industry. By his early 20s, he was owner/operator of Syd's Trucking, hauling lumber from Spray Lakes to Calgary. He met a local farm girl, Kathleen Corless, and they married on March 11, 1953. They lived in a small cabin until Syd and his brother, Charlie, built their new home on a ¼ section acquired from Kay's father. They moved in with their 2 little girls, Wendy and Connie, only to have the home ravaged by fire in the dead of winter. The structure of the home was saved and after 6 months they moved back in. By this time Syd was farming with his father-in-law. Their family grew over the next years with the arrival of two boys – Stephen and Paul, and another girl, Deanna. Syd and Kay remained on the farm until 2018 when health issues made it necessary to move into supportive living.

Syd's life was always motivated by love of his family, a deep faith, service to his neighbors and community; and built on the values of integrity, hospitality, and social justice. He loved children, especially his own kids and grands. He wasn't fond of vacationing, but he loved going for a drive, seeing what was going on in his community. He enjoyed gardening, his many pets, sweets, and a "gob" of ice-cream. He had a keen interest in history and collected quite a group of photos, clippings and local community and provincial history books. He spent many hours later in life with his collection, sharing it with folks that visited. With Kay, their home was always open, and their table always had room for one more. He was an extrovert and insatiably curious. You could always find him at some street corner,

coffee shop, or kitchen table, chatting with someone, learning, and sharing his faith. Syd would travel miles, sometimes in the dead of night, to help a family member or friend in need. He never threw away what might be valuable later and he gave away and lent without contract of return, anything he had in that collection. He tinkered on any piece of farm machinery or vehicle to keep it running for himself or for a neighbor.

During the winters of 1964 and 1966, Syd spent time in the NWT, running caterpillar to clear telegraph lines. It was dark, cold and lonely. He wrote faithfully, both to Kay and the kids.

In 1971 Syd started his 18-year political career as a counsellor for division 5 of the County of Mountain View and as a member of the School Board. In 1980 the counsellors voted him Reeve, where he served uncontested until 1989. During his tenure, he saw and participated in many important events, the most notable being the Sundre Airport officially opening in 1985. Syd and Kay accepted a commemorative plaque, representing the Award of Merit from the Canadian Owners and Pilots Association, noting the opening of the airport was largely due to his foresight and leadership. In 1990, he was appointed the president of the newly formed County Airport Commission. He participated in the opening of the County Winter Games in Lloydminister in 1981; the Foothills Retreat Lodge in 1984; the Olds General and Auxiliary Hospital and Nursing Home in 1986. He worked tirelessly on his political passions for better roads, school system and representation until his retirement in 1989.

He was recognized for his volunteer contribution on the Municipal Anniversary Committee to the Alberta 75thAnniversary, presented with a service award by the Alberta School Trustees Association for his 18-year contribution to the school board and was declared a Great Albertan for his exemplary service to his fellow Albertans. After retiring from the County, he was named the Executive Director of

the Mountain View Taxpayers Association, remaining a strong advocate for community, as long as he was able.

A parallel journey all his life revolved around his faith and the local church. His mom was in the Salvation Army and started the local Sunday School. That deeply impacted him. He believed the church belonged to the whole community, and went about being God's hands and feet in whatever situation or role he was in. He did everything from moving buildings and pastors to mentoring young pastors and teaching Sunday school where he was known to engage thoughtful debate. He served on the board and served the people. He was known for his passion for youth, leaving lasting memories of hosting groups of teens then sneaking off to town to return with pop and ice cream for floats.

When he was 69 Syd survived two heart attacks and a quintuple bypass surgery. After recovery, he slowed down quite a bit. He retired from public life and spent more time visiting at the 'coffee row'. He loved nothing better than Sunday afternoon roast beef dinners with everyone at home, retiring to sleep in his recliner, with his faithful dog snuggled by his side.

Syd - husband, dad, papa, grandpapa and friend, will be remembered fondly for the man he was and the service he gave. His legacy lives on. We were all blessed by his presence and the world was a better place that he walked in it. He entered peacefully into the arms of his Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and we are confident he is hiking in Heaven.

The family wishes to thank all those who have offered compassionate and professional care to both Syd and Kay in their later years, including: In-home caregivers, Dr. Ward and the many thoughtful staff of both Innisfail Sunset Manor and Sundre Supportive Living.

A Family Memorial will be held later this spring.

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