



Larry J. Robinson

October 3, 1949 - September 3, 2025

Larry's funeral mass will be viewable at <https://vimeo.com/event/5359301>

Larry J. Robinson, 75, Valley City, North Dakota, passed away Wednesday, September 3, 2025, at Abbott Northwestern Hospital, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Visitation will be held at St. Catherine Catholic Church, Valley City, on Tuesday, September 9 from 5 pm to 7 pm with a prayer vigil at 7 pm. A Funeral Mass will be celebrated at 10:30 am, Wednesday, September 10, at St. Catherine Catholic Church. Burial will be in Memory Gardens, Valley City.

Larry James Robinson, the son of Floyd and Denise (Kleiter) Robinson was born October 3, 1949, in Bismarck, ND. He graduated from Tappen High School and earned his B.S. degree in education from VCSU and his Master of Science degree in Educational Administration from NDSU. He started his career as a teacher in Warwick, ND then returned to VCSU.

Larry met his wife, Mary Lee Haugland, while working at the Viking News at VCSU. Following graduation, they were married and had two sons, James and Travis. To all who knew Larry, his family was his world and biggest accomplishments, especially his grandsons Alex, Max and Jax. To them, he was an ordinary person, their biggest supporter and sometimes voice of reason. He was a true legacy, and his favorite quote will live on as a reminder forever, "You're not in control."

Larry's story is woven into the fabric of VCSU. A 1971 graduate, he dedicated more than 49 years of his career to advancing the mission of the university and spent 32 years as a Senator in the North Dakota State Legislature. The years overlapped as did many of his on campus and off campus jobs and legislative accomplishments. Beginning as Director of the Memorial Student Center and Student Activities in 1975, he later became the first Director of the VCSU Foundation in 1996. As the VCSU Foundation Director and the Executive Director of University Advancement, Larry grew the Foundation from \$1.3 million in 1996 to \$24.4 million in 2024. Nearly all that growth has funded VCSU scholarships which have resulted in the record-breaking enrollment growth of the college that Larry loved. He would humbly point out that he didn't do it alone, but it was his leadership and vision that made it happen.

In 2021, Larry was named Capital Campaign Director for VCSU which led to a major renovation of the McCarthy School of Education and the VCSU Tharaldson Athletic Center. In 2013, his leadership drove the funding of the Rhoades Science Center. In 2022 the 32-million-dollar state funded Larry J. Robinson Center for the Arts was finished on the VCSU campus. Larry was instrumental in securing the funding. He also played a major role in the funding and building of the Gaukler Wellness Center in Valley City. The Robinson Recovery Center in Fargo, ND is a bricks and mortar legislative accomplishment that Larry was largely responsible for. Larry Robinson was involved in countless other legislative initiatives that were always about helping the citizens of North Dakota. He truly cared about the least, the lost, and the last.

Larry's involvement in Valley City organizations include Past President, Valley City Area Chamber of Commerce; Barnes County Wildlife Federation; Valley City Area Chamber of Commerce; Governor's Alcohol & Drug Prevention

Advisory Task Force; Legislative Council 1991- 2014; Member, VCSU–V-500; Century Club Scholarship; Organizations; Elks; Eagles; Knights of Columbus; Kiwanis and member of St. Catherine Catholic Church.

Larry is survived by his wife; son James (Mandi); grandchildren Alex, Max and Jax. He is also survived by his siblings Carl (Sheila) Robinson and Robin Robinson and many nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his parents, his son Travis Robinson and his siblings Paul Robinson and Dennis (Bernie) Robinson.

Memorials may be directed to the Valley City State Foundation – Larry Robinson Scholarship.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Oliver-Nathan Funeral Chapel, Valley City, ND. An online guestbook is available at www.olivenathanchapel.com

Cemetery Details

Memory Gardens of Valley City

3416 121st Ave SE
Valley City, ND 58072
(701) 845-2881

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 9. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

St. Catherine Catholic Church
540 3rs Ave NE
Valley City, ND 58072
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Prayer Vigil

SEP 9. 7:00 PM (CT)

St. Catherine Catholic Church
540 3rd Ave. NE
Valley City, ND

Funeral Mass

SEP 10. 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Catherine Catholic Church
540 3rd Ave. NE
Valley City, ND

Tribute Wall

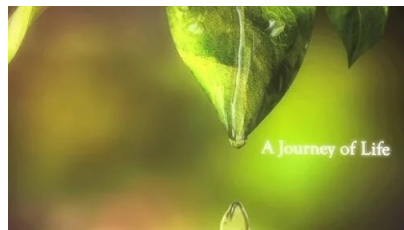


“ *View and Download the Funeral Program*

Oliver-Nathan Funeral Chapel - September 09, 2025 at 10:59 AM



“ *Oliver - Nathan Funeral Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of Larry J. Robinson*



Oliver-Nathan Funeral Chapel - September 09, 2025 at 10:29 AM



“ *Oliver - Nathan Funeral Chapel created a Webcast in memory of Larry J. Robinson*



Oliver-Nathan Funeral Chapel - September 04, 2025 at 05:38 PM



“ *Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Larry J. Robinson.*



September 24, 2025 at 05:04 PM



“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with your family as you begin your healing journey.*

Dianne & Brad Graff - September 12, 2025 at 03:34 PM



“ *Sincere condolences to your family and friends! May the peace of God be with you as you mourn his death.*

Durward and Phyllis Otterness - September 10, 2025 at 05:35 PM



“ *Audrey Solwey-Joramo lit a candle in memory of Larry J. Robinson*



Audrey Solwey-Joramo - September 09, 2025 at 12:49 PM



“ 6 files added to the album Life Tributes



Oliver-Nathan Funeral Chapel - September 09, 2025 at 10:02 AM

AS

I was a student in Warwick school when Larry and Mary started teaching there. Mary taught us in 7th grade and Larry had us in high school. I graduated in 1977 but they were already gone by then. I loved Larry as a gentle giant to us. Those were my fun years in school. I caused a lot of chaos for them. He also drove my school bus and she was our cheerleader advisor in 7th grade!! I always wonder if they remember their teachings in Warwick. He always walked around with a yardstick in his hands and would slap it on our desks when he thought we weren't paying attention to him! May you RIP Larry Robinson!

Audrey Solwey-Joramo - September 09, 2025 at 12:54 PM

AO

Dear Mary Lee and Family,

Please know that we are thinking of you.

Valley City State University students, faculty, staff, and administrators are encouraged to pursue their passions and strive to be difference makers.

Larry Robinson is one of the all-time great difference makers I have known. He was a difference maker in his efforts for his faith, family, community, state, and Valley City State University.

Larry is appreciated, respected, and will be missed. Larry lived his life. He will continue to live in peace eternally. His efforts as a difference maker will remain for many years to come.

*God bless you and your family.
Al and Trisa Olson*

Alan Olson - September 10, 2025 at 09:06 AM

RF

“ *Dear Mary Lee and family:*

My sympathy for the loss of a great man. I will treasure my personal and professional relations with Larry.

Larry was dedicated to his family and faith. His legislative effort benefited his community, its citizens and VCSU to whom he gave his life's work. He impacted every facet of the University.

Blessed is the memory of Larry Robinson.

R. Jon Fitzner

R. Jon Fitzner - September 09, 2025 at 01:07 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Larry J. Robinson.



September 08, 2025 at 09:34 PM

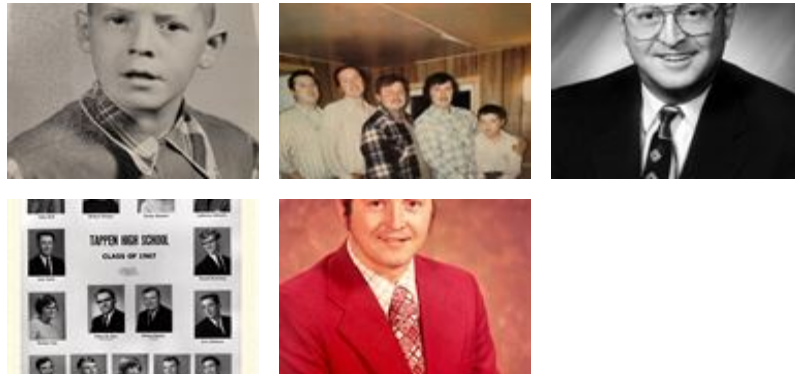


“ There was never a bigger or brighter advocate for Valley City State University, District 24, and Higher Education in North Dakota than our friend, Larry Robinson. His contributions to his community and our state were many. Larry will be forever missed and never forgotten.

Nick Archuleta - September 08, 2025 at 04:46 PM



“ 201 files added to the album LifeTributes



Oliver-Nathan Funeral Chapel - September 08, 2025 at 03:33 PM

WR

“ *Wade and Mindy Remmick purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Larry J. Robinson.*



Wade and Mindy Remmick - September 08, 2025 at 09:05 AM

GM

“ *During the time that I served as Department Adjutant of the ND AMVETS I had had the opportunity of meeting Senator Robinson on quite a few times. A very cordial man always had time to listen and would act on what was discussed. I know he served the Veterans well and was instrumental with getting the new Veterans home in Lisbon.*

To his family I send my prayers and wish for you to remember all the memories of this great man who did so much for the State of ND, May he R.I.P.

Gary Maddock - September 07, 2025 at 10:20 AM

TS

“ *Senator Robinson was my mentor in the North Dakota State Senate. He was an amazing leader and showed everyone how to work with both parties. Prayers to the family.*



Tom J Seymour - September 06, 2025 at 07:59 PM

DJ

“ We will always remember Larry as a great leader for VCSU, the city of Valley City, District 24, the state of North Dakota and every organization that he belonged to. Larry was always accessible and easy to talk to. He was a great listener and always followed through on his promises. Plus Larry was a friend. All of us, have lost a great man!

Our sympathies and prayers to Mary Lee and all of Larry's family.

Kerry and Duane Johnson

Duane Johnson - September 06, 2025 at 04:53 PM

BW

“ Lorraine and I were saddened to learn of the passing of Larry Robinson. During my tenure as Executive Director of the North Dakota Department of Human Services from 1993-97, I had the honor of interacting with Senator Robinson frequently- our Lord did not create a finer gentleman. Despite coming from opposite sides of the political aisle, Larry was the type of quality North Dakota who put partisan politics aside for the genuine good of the people he served. I know God has, and will continue to bless the memory and legacy of Senator Larry Robinson.

Respectfully,

Bud (& Lorraine) Wessman

Bud Wessman - September 05, 2025 at 09:55 PM

SC

“ South Central Dakota Regional Council purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of Larry J. Robinson.



South Central Dakota Regional Council - September 05, 2025
at 12:43 PM

SC

“ South Central Dakota Regional Council planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Larry J. Robinson.

South Central Dakota Regional Council - September 05, 2025 at 12:43 PM

SB

“ Sorry to hear of Larry's death, I was looking for another obituary on the Valley City site when I saw the notice. I greatly admired Larry as I served on the Governor's Committee Status on Women quite a few years ago. He was a very caring person and tried to help so many through his legislative work. I have always continued to watch many of the issues he supported through the years and he touched many lives in our state I'm sure. He will be greatly missed.



Sharron Brady - September 05, 2025 at 10:56 AM

TG

“ Tony & Karen Grindberg purchased the Serene R
etreat for the family of Larry J. Robinson.



Tony & Karen Grindberg - September 05, 2025 at 10:36 AM

TG

“ Tony & Karen Grindberg planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Larry J. Robinson.

Tony & Karen Grindberg - September 05, 2025 at 10:36 AM

RD

“ Sen. Robinson worked hard for all the people of North Dakota. I am
honored to have been able to call him my friend.
Renae Doan

Renae Doan - September 04, 2025 at 05:13 PM

SS

“ Sharayah Robinson & Kyle Symanski purchased
the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Larry
J. Robinson.



Sharayah Robinson & Kyle Symanski - September 04, 2025 at
02:59 PM

TM

“ Larry, the Senator for all! My condolences to all family and friends.

Tim Mathern - September 04, 2025 at 02:54 PM

DC

Larry was a family man, friend, statesman and inspiration. I am grateful for having had him in my life.
Dave Carlsrud

Dave Carlsrud - September 04, 2025 at 08:26 PM

GR

Mary Lee, From time together in Tappen, as roommates at VCSU, working together on the Viking News and attending a national Student NEA meeting with a side trip to Boston Larry was the best friend you could have. And that did not change as he moved to the state leadership scene as a State Senator. The message I got from Larry when my wife passed away was so sincere and supporting. The last time we visited was at the dedication of the Performing Arts Center. He was so busy finding that minute or two to talk to everyone. And what a program honoring his work at VCSU and in the Senate.

But the most important memory of Larry was as a family man. He was so proud of you and his boys,

May Larry rest in peace and may you find comfort in his faith and the memories of the many years you shared.

Gary Rath

Gary Rath - September 04, 2025 at 09:21 PM

DC

Larry was my high school principle in Warwick. He treated us all with respect. In later years I crossed paths with Larry on many occasions during the legislative session when I was Director of ND BCI. Larry even attended my retirement gathering when I left BCI. He gave me an autographed yard stick similar to the one he may, or may not have, carried in the halls of Warwick High School. He was a great guy!

Dallas Carlson - September 05, 2025 at 01:05 AM

DD

Mary Lee...thinking of you during this sad time. It has been nearly a lifetime, but I remember you guys fondly. Take care! Deb and Les Dondoneau

Deb Dondoneau - September 05, 2025 at 08:04 AM

TR

We had the privilege of having Larry as a board member for many years. He was always a voice of compassion and knowledge. I am so glad to have had the past decade with Larry on our side. He will be greatly missed but his memory will go on forever. He was the best.
Traci Redlin/South Central Dakota Regional Council.

Traci Redlin - September 05, 2025 at 09:55 AM

ML

Our paths crossed many times, especially when I was the bill clerk in the Senate for the 1991 session. Also at other Democrat events and with visits when MSU and VCSU shared a president. Such a fine man, witty, intelligent and passionate about higher education. He left a wonderful legacy of caring.
Myrna Lyng, mayville, ND

myrna lyng - September 05, 2025 at 02:38 PM

PG

I first met Larry while I was in high school at Tolna, and he was teaching in Warwick. I don't remember the details of how we had a conversation...more than likely we were at Warwick for a basketball game. Years few years later I showed up at VCSU after transferring with my associate degree. Larry was the first person I met as I walked in to the Student Union. It was like he just picked right up on our earlier conversation. I was always impressed by how genuine he was and his desire to make things better for all around him. He was a true gentleman—always giving of himself for the betterment of others. Valley City, District 24, and the State of North Dakota have lost a legend. As we begin to comprehend a world without Larry, his legacy of forward thinking will live on all around North Dakota. Mary Lee and family, we hold you in our hearts during this difficult time.

Pete Gjovik - September 09, 2025 at 05:31 PM