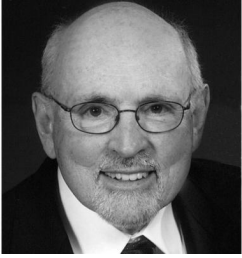

Gene L. Oliver



Oliver, Gene L.

Pittsford: Thursday, March 13th, 2014, at age 84, suddenly due to complications from a chronic illness. Gene is predeceased by his son Fred (Terrin) and is survived by Nancy Warren-Oliver, his wife of 33 years; son Jamie (Dalia); daughter Catherine; stepdaughter Susan Johnston (Roly); stepsons Roger Warren (Mary) and Jeff Warren (Liz); and his first wife, Carol Kaiser Wasson. Gene is also survived by 3 grandchildren and 10 step-grandchildren.

Gene was born in Rockford, IL, graduated from [Beloit College](#) with a B.S., and graduated from [Northwestern University](#) with a Ph.D. in organic chemistry. He worked for Kodak in the research labs from 1954 until he retired in 1989.

Gene was an active member of the First Unitarian Church of Rochester for over 40 years, was an active member in the local American Chemical Society, and loved his time at the family cottage on Keuka Lake.

A memorial service will be held at the First Unitarian Church (220 S Winton Rd, Rochester, NY 14610), Saturday April 19th at 11AM.

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Gene Leech Oliver

Gene L. Oliver grew up in Rockford, IL, and was fascinated by the Periodic Table of Elements by seventh grade. In an eighth grade paper he wrote that chemistry as a life career would enable him to find out what all those little symbols meant. He liked Mr. Max, his chemistry teacher at West High School, and went on to major in chemistry at Beloit College in Wisconsin. As a junior (1950), he received the John Nair Award, consisting of a full ACS membership and a subscription to Industrial and Engineering Chemistry. He was proud of his ACS membership which he continued the rest of his life. Breaking with Beloit tradition of pursuing graduate work at University of Wisconsin, he earned his Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry at Northwestern in Evanston, IL, serving as a teaching assistant for Charles D. Hurd. Northwestern professors emphasized the importance of ACS activities. During summers, he worked in Rockford as the first employee of a one-man chemical company (which became Pierce Chemical), synthesizing 5-22 liter batches of ninhydrin. Early on, Gene had developed a deep appreciation of the creative aspects of organic chemistry.

An organic chemistry professor, who had spent a sabbatical year at Eastman Kodak, strongly influenced Gene to seek employment there. Gene had already joined Kodak Research Labs (1954) before he finished his thesis and returned for his final oral exams. After two years synthesizing addenda compounds in Jack Gates' Emulsion Research group and four in emulsion making in Ed McWilliams' group, he worked a decade in the Brooker and Heseltine sensitizing dye group. He not only synthesized dyes, but mastered the intricate rules of giving complex organic compounds their proper chemical names. This, plus a good liberal arts background in language and writing, served him well in his next assignment (1970) in Harry Roberts' patent liaison group. After joining the Patent Liaison Staff he wrote up many Kodak discoveries and assisted attorneys in patenting inventions, especially in color diffusion transfer photography. He's named as the inventor on some 16 patents. In 1984 he was a technical staff associate with a special assignment reporting to Carl Kohrt.

Gene was an active member of the Section since the early 1960s, serving on the Harrison Howe, Nominations, Policy & Bylaws, and Program Committees. He also served as Secretary (1967-68), Program Chairman, Councilor (1974-88) and Alternate Councilor. As Councilor, Gene represented the Rochester Section on national committees such as Membership Affairs, Dues, Patents & Related Matters, Budget & Finance, and on a Task Force on Administrative Expense and Program Ranking. In 1984 Gene received the Section Award and in 1999 the ACS 50 year Award. Gene was also a very active in the section's Retired Chemists Committee for many years, writing the bios of a number of 50 year ACS members for CHEMunications and the subsequent e-mail version.

He enjoyed singing a number of years in the Rochester Oratorio Society. He was active in jogging and cycling, often riding his bike in a 14 mile commute to KRL from home in Pittsford and participating in 10 mile time trials. Gene was a history buff and enjoyed reading biographies such as the biography of Thomas Jefferson. Gene and his wife Nancy liked traveling. Some of their travels took them to southern France visiting the Riviera, Venice, Languedoc, and Provence. Previous trips were to Turkey, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, and all parts of Europe. The Olivers spent their summers at Keuka Lake where they enjoyed sailing. After spending 30 years at the lake in a trailer, they built a house in 1995. Both Gene and Nancy were active in the Unitarian Church of Rochester, singing in the choir. As assistant controller in the church, Gene worked closely with Dr. David Stewart, also a former KRL chemist and Rochester ACS Section chairman.

Gene was a very generous soul and literally would give a friend the shirt off his back. Gene was born 6/7/29 in Rockford, IL, and passed away in Rochester on March 13, 2014. He was predeceased by his son Fred, and is survived by Nancy, his wife of 33 years, son James (Dalia) Oliver of Webster, daughter Catherine of Rochester, daughter-in-law Terrin Swift of Westford, MA, and former wife Carol Wasson of Webster, NY.