

# OBITUARIES



## ALMA OMAN CARLSON

Alma Oman Carlson, 96, of Two Harbors, passed away on April 18, 2022.

Alma was born in Brimson on October 18, 1925, as the sixth child of Axel and Adelina (Skogman) Oman.



Alma enjoyed time with her family and friends, knitting, crocheting, playing cards, sewing, and many years of bowling.

Alma wrote this obituary herself several years ago and wanted to keep it very simple. We, as her family, felt compelled to add a few comments about how amazing she was. Alma was the best mother, grandmother, aunt, and friend you could imagine. She was the queen of rummage sales, loved organizing neighborhood parties, made the absolute best homemade bread, and treasured time with her family more than anything. Knowing Alma was knowing a true treasure.

Alma is preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Stanley; and her son, Marvin. Also preceding her in death are sisters, Ina Nelson, Ailie Poulin, and Anna Maki; and brothers Arvid, Alex, Arthur, and Edward Oman.

Alma is survived by her daughter, Marilyn (Mike) Cribbs of Owings, MD; grandchildren Daniel (Erin) Carlson of Two Harbors, Lisa (Kevin) Manson of Arden Hills, Krysta (Mike) Green of O'Fallon, MO, Erik (Gia) Cribbs of Owings, MD, and Jeremy (Katy) Cribbs of Owings, MD; great-grandchildren Kayla, Emma, Alyssa, Austin, Evan, Jack, Eli, and Max; her brother, Albert Oman, of Palo; and many nieces, nephews and loving friends.

Alma's family would like to extend a huge thank you to the amazing staff at Barross Cottage II in Two Harbors for the exceptional love and care they provided Alma in her final years.

Services will be held on Friday, May 6, 2022 at 11:30 AM at Cavallin Funeral Home in Two Harbors, followed by a luncheon/visitation at the Two Harbors American Legion.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Two Harbors Ambulance Service, Community Partners, Two Harbors Area Food Shelf, or the American Cancer Society. To share memories or condolences online, please visit [www.cavallinfuneralhome.com](http://www.cavallinfuneralhome.com).

## INA ETHEL BACKMAN

Ina Ethel Backman died peacefully on April 19, 2022 at Barross Cottage 2 in Two Harbors, MN. She was 95. Ina was born November 7, 1926 in Bismarck, ND to Jacob and Hilma Banttari. When she was about 6 years old, she moved with her family to a farm near Hibbing, MN and after a few more years moved to another farm near the Hibbing airport. Each farm was only a little less poor than the previous one.



Ina attended public schools in Hibbing, worked for St. Louis County in the Hibbing welfare office, and worked as a nanny for a time in Hibbing. She eventually met her future husband Thomas Backman at a dance hall near Side Lake north of Chisholm, MN. They married in June of 1950 in Hibbing, just a few months before Tom was called up by the Marines for service in Korea. After he returned, Tom and Ina lived in Hibbing for a couple years while Tom had his first teaching job in Cook, MN. Their eldest son Glen was born there a few months before they moved to Two Harbors in 1953. Tom's career at Two Harbors High School as a teacher and administrator spanned over 30 years. Son Paul and daughter Carol were born in Two Harbors. Ina worked as a bookkeeper for the Texaco station in Two Harbors for many years, a job she greatly enjoyed, even when she had to pump gas occasionally. She was a long-time volunteer at Bethlehem Lutheran Church working in the kitchen for weddings and funerals.

Ina was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Tom, and her daughter Carol. Her 14 brothers and sisters preceded her in death: Fred, Francis, Lempy, Felix, Edward, Henry, Oscar, Martha, Linda, Sigrid, Reino, Ernest, Sylvia, and Wayne.

Ina is survived by her sons Glen (Linda) Backman and Paul Backman, son-in-law Cleavy Hoover, granddaughter Rachel Backman, grandson Cole Hoover (Kayla) and numerous nieces and nephews.

Ina's family wishes to extend their gratitude and thanks to the staff of Barross Cottage 2 in Two Harbors and St. Luke's Hospice for the excellent care she received in the final years of her life.

The funeral service will be held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Two Harbors on Tuesday May 3rd at 11:00 AM. Burial will be at Lakeview Cemetery in Two Harbors on a later date. To share your memories or condolences online please visit [www.cavallinfuneralhome.com](http://www.cavallinfuneralhome.com).

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## Anderson's Farm

As Dean and Bonnie became older, the farm operations gradually decreased. Art Lorntson passed away in the 90's and the partnership to work Art's land dissolved. Dean developed some back problems in his late 70's and hired some help to keep the farm running including their neighbor, Bonnie Warner, and David Berglund from Grand Marais to cut hay.

After Dean and Bonnie passed away, the land was split between Allen and his brother, Tim. Allen had spent his career working in log trucking, building trailers, and hauling wood. Allen quit trucking in 1998 and went to work for North Shore Mining until his "retirement" in 2016. In his retired life, Allen participates in a tractor club with his fleet of Allis-Chambers machines, competes in Mud Bogging with his modified U.S. built WWII tank, hauls for sawmills, plows snow, and works on tractors and custom builds in his shop. I asked Allen to share his fondest memories of life on the farm: "I enjoyed driving the tractor and tilling the field. I liked to see the ground turn from a field to be ready for planting. I enjoyed the mechanical end more than the animal end."

Just like his father and mother, Allen is no stranger to a strong work ethic. He tells me, "If you're supposed to be at work at 7:00am and you're there at 6:45am, then you're 15 minutes late." It's clear that life growing up on a farm instilled a need to keep his hands busy helping others and getting work done. That's why "retired" Allen is still constantly working on projects and finding jobs to do. Despite such a work ethic, Allen has clear thoughts on raising animals the way his family did on the North Shore: "My grandpa made a living with a flock of sheep and two horses. My dad made a living with 200 heads of beef and 400 hogs. There's no way I could make a living farming up here today."

And Allen's perspective has merit. I talk with a lot of farmers in my work and most hold down full time employment in addition to their farming responsibilities. This rings especially true for those who farm chickens, pigs, and cattle. Two common obstacles I regularly hear about include affordable, USDA inspected meat processing (of which there are no facilities on the North Shore) and sourcing feed including hay (which made up the bulk of the Anderson's operation in the peak of summer). It seems like these infrastructure challenges must be addressed to realize the dream of abundant, sustainable raised, North Shore beef, pork, chicken, and (don't knock it 'til you try it) rabbits.

I hope my conversation with Allen is an ongoing one. I hope to keep documenting the rich agricultural history in the Finland area and all along the North Shore. I hope we can learn lessons from the past to continue to grow a strong local food system. In the meantime I know I can always stop by Our Place in Finland for breakfast and probably find Allen sitting at the bar, sharing a coffee, a laugh, and a good story or two with friends who spent their entire lives in this community and witnessed it change. Sometimes for better and sometimes for worse. But some things will never change - like Allen's breakfast order: American potatoes with sausage gravy. Meat, potatoes, and gravy. Just like every dinner on Anderson's Farm.

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## First HRA Exec Director in Cook County Jason Hale

By Steve Fernlund

Jason Hale has assumed the Executive Director position in the recently formed Cook County Housing and Redevelopment Authority. Most recently, Hale worked for almost seven years at the City of Duluth. He worked in business and economic development efforts, ending with the position of Senior Housing Developer, a newly created position that he held for three years.

A native of Owatonna, MN, a small city in southern Minnesota that he says is a great place to grow up, Hale ended up completing his bachelor degree at the University of Minnesota Duluth and he has been in the Arrowhead for more than a decade. Hale received his Master Degree in Management and Change Leadership in 2016 from The College of St. Scholastica in Duluth. He has been a registered investment advisor and is a licensed Real Estate Broker and Appraiser. He worked for a year with the St. Louis County Assessor's Office as an appraiser in 2014.

Hale was one of two finalists for the Cook County position and began his tenure this month. He says he has a number of ideas to consider for dealing with the housing shortage in Cook County. He is familiarizing himself with the Year One Work Plan that the HRA Board of Directors has recently completed. The eight page document is long on values and



**HRA Executive Director, Jason Hale.**

(photo by Stever Fernlund)

short on specifics, but lays out a framework to reach an important goal, "Affordable, safe, and livable housing is a cornerstone of personal, family, and community stability".

With his experience in Duluth, Hale expects to be replicating and adapting plans that worked there. He is visiting people all over the county to get a feel for what the actual housing needs are.

Hale and his wife, Kristen, currently live in Finland, MN, up Highway 1 from the shore. They originally bought a house there that they rehabilitated and sold in April of last year to get their current house. They plan to move closer to Grand Marais in the near future.

With experience of remote working during the pandemic of the last two years, Hale is set up to be working from his first day on the job.

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