

Olson Insurance continues a family legacy of integrity and service for 80 years

At Olson Insurance Inc., it's an unwritten rule that everyone receives a prompt return phone call, no matter what. It is part of the tradition of integrity and service that has guided Olson Insurance since it was established in 1934 by Glenn O. Tenold. Four generations of Tenold's family have since served in the agency including his sons-in-law Jerry Olson (1961) and Gene Hagen (1977), grandson Kory Olson (1990), and great-grandson Bryan Koster (2014).

Today, the agency is owned by the father-and-son team of Jerry and Kory Olson and offers all lines of insurance with offices in Northwood and Manly, Iowa. The offices also operate with five assistants, Michele Bachtle, Suzie Reyerson, Sharlene Stoddard, Carol Hennigar and Sherry Olson. They serve Worth, Cerro Gordo, Mitchell, and Winnebago counties in Iowa and Freeborn county in Minnesota. The agency has often been recognized as a Grinnell Mutual President's Club member.

Jerry and Kory tell *Teamwork* readers about Olson Insurance and their partnership with Grinnell Mutual.

How did your agency's relationship with Grinnell Mutual begin?

"Mr. Tenold managed Worth Mutual Insurance Association in Northwood. He and L.G. Keeney struck up a friendship at a Mutual Insurance Association of Iowa meeting in the early days of Grinnell Mutual. Mr. Tenold later served as chairman of the Grinnell Mutual Board of Directors while Mr. Keeney was president. Their tenures were among the most innovative periods of Grinnell Mutual's history. There were many times I would pick Mr. Keeney up from the local airstrip," said Jerry.

Featured Business Partner

About Olson Insurance

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With offices in Northwood and Manly, Iowa, Olson Insurance Inc. has served customers in northern Iowa and southern Minnesota since 1934. This family-owned independent insurance agency shares staff and office space with Worth Mutual Insurance Association in Northwood. The agency has often been recognized as a Grinnell Mutual President's Club member.

How did you get involved in the insurance business?

"When I graduated from college, I was asked to join my father-in-law's business. I've worked for Worth Mutual and the agency for 52 years. In 1978, I served as president of the Mutual Insurance Association of Iowa. Kory handles most of the day-to-day business now, but I still handle some of the larger accounts, such as the city, county, school, etc., that I have worked with for years," said Jerry.

"In college I worked as a crop adjuster. After graduating I accepted a position as a field representative for a large crop insurance company. In 1990 Worth Mutual opened a branch office in Manly, where I accepted a position to manage that agency," said Kory.

What lessons have you passed down to your family about working in the insurance industry?

"Mr. Tenold was a great mentor and a bright man. I have tried to pass down what he instilled in me – integrity and honesty. That and phone calls are always returned promptly, no matter what the phone call was about," said Jerry. "It's so fun to end my career with my son as a partner and grandson now joining. It's one of the highlights of my life."

What is Olson Insurance's greatest strength?

"We specialize in farm and crop insurance, but we are a full lines agency. Our greatest strengths are our knowledge of the industry, our longevity in the community, and our service. People know us and the quality of our service," said Kory.



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Above: Here, some of the agency's earliest producers, also officers of Worth Mutual Insurance Association, greet over 2,200 visitors at Worth Mutual's centennial celebration in 1982. From left: Glenn O. Tenold, mutual president and agency principal; Jerry Olson, mutual secretary and agent; Gene Hagen, mutual assistant secretary and agent, and Arnold Jorde, mutual chairman.