

REFERENCE TITLE: Mickey Ollson; death resolution

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-fifth Legislature
Second Regular Session
2022

SR 1004

Introduced by
Senator Kerr

A RESOLUTION

ON THE DEATH OF MICKEY OLLSON.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Mickey Ollson passed away peacefully and surrounded by his loved
2 ones on January 9, 2022 at the age of 80 after a short but courageous
3 battle with cancer.

4 Born and raised in the West Valley of the Phoenix metropolitan area,
5 Mickey graduated from North High School in 1959 and went on to earn both
6 his bachelor's degree in business and master's degree in marketing from
7 Arizona State University (ASU). He was a member of several business
8 fraternities and the president of Kappa Sigma and worked as a popular disk
9 jockey at the University's radio station. It was during those years at
10 ASU that Mickey learned how his love for animals could help to pay for the
11 cost of his education by raising rabbits, guinea pigs and hamsters and
12 selling them to local pet stores.

13 After graduation, Mickey started teaching at Alhambra High School,
14 and his love for animals continued to grow and never waned. He founded
15 Ollson's Rare Bird Farm where he bred rare and endangered birds for
16 zoological facilities across the country.

17 Once he retired, Mickey took a risk and used his life savings to
18 make his childhood dream a reality by opening Wildlife World Zoo in
19 Litchfield Park, which was then considered the far, far West Valley. With
20 a hammer in hand and a few good friends in tow, he helped to personally
21 frame the zoo's first buildings, and he and his team continued to build as
22 the zoo expanded to nearly 100 acres.

23 In order to share his wealth of experience, Mickey cofounded the
24 Arizona United Animal Care and Business Coalition to represent the diverse
25 experience and expertise of the animal care community through advocacy,
26 education and engagement. In 2021, he was the recipient of the Zoological
27 Association of America's Lifetime Achievement Award, which is considered
28 the highest award honoring professional excellence and contribution toward
29 the zoo industry.

30 A stalwart worker with a creative and passionate vision, Mickey's
31 Wildlife World Zoo has educated and entertained countless visitors over
32 the past 38 years. He was on-site at the zoo almost every day to keep up
33 to date with the animals and their keepers, and was proud to see his
34 childhood vision of owning a zoo turn into Arizona's largest exotic animal
35 collection with over 6,000 animals.

36 Mickey is survived by his wife, Connie, his four children, Micalin,
37 Louis, Kenny and DeShawn, his eight grandchildren and his three
38 great-grandchildren. He will be missed by his loved ones and the
39 countless colleagues who worked so selflessly to care for the animals at
40 the Wildlife World Zoo.

41 Therefore

42 Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Arizona:

43 That the Members of the Senate extend their most sincere sympathies
44 and deepest condolences to the family and friends of Mickey Ollson.