

NEWS OBITUARIES

Roy Schulz, former Mankato area legislator

- He served in the state House from 1951 to 1970 and worked for more equal public school funding.

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Joy Schulz remembers her dad best for his jokes. But Roy Schulz, a former legislator from the Mankato area who died May 1 at age 89, also was a political leader whose efforts helped prepare the way for the so-called Minnesota Miracle in 1971.

The Minnesota Miracle shifted major funding of public schools and local government from local property taxes to state income and sales taxes. Schulz, who died of natural causes at the Benedictine Living Community in St. Peter, Minn., was chairman of the House Education Committee in his last few years in the Legislature and pushed for more equitable school funding, according to Minneapolis Star reports from 1969. He resigned in 1970, af-



Roy Schulz

ter 19 years in the House.

Schulz, a Republican, was in the middle of the education funding debate, said Rod Searle, who served in the House with him.

"The outstate legislators were fighting for the same kinds of money the Twin Cities suburbs were getting for education," Searle said. "Roy was very much a champion of that to make sure his rural districts were treated fairly."

In the mid-1960s, Schulz was also instrumental in getting state money for new campus classrooms, dormitories and athletic facilities at what was then called Mankato State College, said Searle, who like Schulz had attended the college.

Joy Schulz, of Rosemount,

said her dad enjoyed debating legislative issues, but what she misses most are his "wonderful blue eyes."

"You could always see the twinkle in them, and then would come a joke," she said. Lots of jokes, often told to captive audiences on summer trips as he drove his wife, Velma, and their three daughters around the country, stopping at nearly every state capital.

"We listened to joke after joke after joke," Schulz recalled. "I think he memorized the joke books."

While on a California trip, Schulz noticed signs that allowed right turns after stopping at red lights. He thought "it was a darn good idea" and authored and got passed a similar measure in Minnesota, his daughter said.

Schulz also was director of Immanuel Hospital in Mankato and a leader in his Lutheran church. And he farmed about 160 acres of corn, soybeans and small grains near

St. Clair, Minn.

Joy Schulz remembers pulling weeds along soybean rows with her father, mother and sisters. "I walked the beans before herbicides were used," she said. They also had chickens, hogs and dogs. The dogs, usually German shepherds, devotedly followed Schulz around and protected the family when he was in St. Paul.

"He loved the independence of farming; you are your own boss," his daughter said.

About a year after he left the Legislature, Schulz began a 20-year career as a lobbyist for Minnesota Real Estate Tax Payers Association.

In addition to his wife, Velma, and daughter Joy, Schulz is survived by two other daughters, Cheryl Adolphson of Rochester and Dawn Clouse of Smithville, Mo., and four grandchildren. Services have been held.