

Andrew William Johnson

February 7, 1938 – May 20, 2025

Andrew (Andy) Johnson, a devoted family man, respected rancher, and proud community member, passed away peacefully on May 20, 2025 at the age of 87.



Born and raised in Newell, SD, Andy built a life rooted in hard work, love, and faith. He spent many years working as a rancher, tending to the land and livestock with the dedication and resilience that defined him. His hands were strong from years of labor, but his heart was always gentle with those he loved.

He later worked at Valley Implement, where he was known for his reliability, knowledge, and warm, easygoing spirit. Eventually, he brought that same steadfastness to his role at the Meade County Courthouse for over 20 years, where he continued serving the community with pride and purpose.

Above all else, Andy cherished his family. He was a loving husband to his beloved wife, Linda, and a proud father to their children; Don, Lourinda and Sandy; as well as a devoted grandfather and great-grandfather, and a caring uncle to all his nieces and nephews. He never missed a chance to share a laugh, lend a hand, or tell a story, and his presence lit up every room he entered.

Andy was preceded in death by his parents, his beloved mother-in-law, Ileen Anders; and five siblings, including Betty J. (John) Niemi, Doris H. Johnson, G. Douglas (Patricia) Johnson, Marilyn M. (Arnold, Jr.) Schmidt, and Judith G. Johnson.

He is survived by his loving wife, Linda, of 45 years; his three devoted children, Don (Edyth) Jennings, Lourinda (Carl) Garner, and Sandy Hayes; his four sisters, Beverly J. Miller, Darlene J. Schafer, Arlene J. Reynolds, and Ida L. (Mel) Johnson; as well as his cherished grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who brought him endless joy. He also leaves behind many beloved nieces and nephews, all of whom held a special place in his heart. His legacy of love, strength, and family will live on through each of them.

Andrew leaves behind a legacy of integrity, kindness, and love. His memory will be carried on by all who were fortunate enough to know him and will forever be treasured by his family.

Graveside services will be held on May 31st at 2:30 p.m., at Bear Butte Cemetery in Sturgis, SD. A celebration of life will be held at the Veterans Club in Sturgis, SD at 3:30 p.m.



What is a Rancher?

Ranchers are usually found where there's cattle-feeding, dehorning, branding, trading, roping and doctoring. Bankers hate to see them coming, little boys admire them, the Secretary of Agriculture confuses them, city people visit and don't understand them, meals wait on them, barbed wire cuts them, but nothing discourages them.

They like fairs, rodeos, auctions, dogies, honks (they aren't the same thing), dances, neighbors, \$80 boots, Saturday in town, poker, good weather, fist fights and fast horses.

Ranchers don't care much for snakes, government men, poodles, fixing fences, screwworms, cold weather, lightning, dairy cows, sage brush, or weak coffee. They put up with salesmen, relatives, worms, flies, floods, blizzards, droughts, bad luck and bad weather.

Today a rancher must be a salesman, animal nutritionist, vet, biologist, weather prophet, and a banker's calculated risk. He handles more money than most businessmen and makes less clear profit than a paper boy.

No man is so far from church, yet so close to God. No man gets as much genuine enjoyment out of running water, television, or a good game of pool.

He carries in his pockets at one time: Bull Durham, pocket knife, staples, tally book, one-inch lead pencil, business cards from at least five competing politicians (all of whom he has promised to vote for), cattle ear-tags, fencing pliers, piggin' string, \$1.98 watch, tillfold (empty) and a curly comb.

No one gets kicked, run over, stepped on, bruised, cut up or as mad as he does in a single day's work.

He is overly optimistic in: the cattle market, next year, the 10-year-old cow that's never calved, range conditions, the hay crop and his twice renewed livestock loan.

No one is as generous, big-hearted, friendly, dependable, wise or honest, and he will swap anything except his spurs, ropes or fife.

He trusts his yellow man.

The rancher is the producer of meat, the Pope of the future, the self-made man of today. Big business doesn't fear him, the government doesn't subsidize him. He relies on free enterprise and the hope that next year will be as good (or better) as last. He doesn't cry on shoulders when hard times hit, but resolves to do better if he can.

He is the epitome of the American ideal, and knows that he either must survive without government or perish with it.

-- taken from News & Times, Jan 1975