

George Rudolph Hlavka was born on May 31, 1926, in Plainview, SD, to Rudolph and Grace (Blake) Hlavka.

George was raised as an only child on a small ranch west of Howes, SD, and attended grade school at a country school. He started high school in Sturgis, SD, in 1939. No one could afford to go home, but every two weeks, parents took turns hauling students back and forth. He got \$1.00, which had to last the entire two weeks.

After school, George and his friends would grab a shovel and work for the City of Sturgis for \$0.35 an hour digging water ditches. This was the first water for the City of Sturgis. He and his friends thought they were rolling in money!

George met his wife of 46 years, Garnet Satter, when she was a freshman and he was a senior at Faith High School. Bob Short's mother hosted a party at her home for some of Bob's friends. Every lady in attendance put a slipper in an old dish pan. The men would then choose a slipper and matched it to his date for that evening. George said he never wanted to leave her side and they were married on May 24, 1948.

George was drafted into the Army in the Spring of 1945. Forty-four young men from Meade County traveled to Fort Snelling in Minnesota for induction. Jimmie O'Grady, Willis Mann, and George were transferred to Jefferson Barracks, MO. Thereafter, they proceeded to Camp Wolters, TX, for basic training in clothing that was way too large. After finishing basic training, an announcement was received as Victory Over Japan Day.

They were sent home for a short furlough and then boarded a darn old train, confident and excited that they were headed overseas, as a bulletin had been posted for them to be at the railroad depot with full field packs, gas masks, and heavy wool uniforms. George and Jimmie woke up three days later in Fort Benning, GA, and that's where they stayed. He was honorably discharged from the Army in the Fall of 1946 at Fort Bragg, NC.

Upon his discharge, he returned to the farm. He also hauled grain and livestock for Jimmy Simons. In 1948, George and Ed McQuirk bought the Howes store with the beer license being solely in Ed's name, as well as Ed being the postmaster, as neither George nor Garnet were old enough. Their daughter, Wanda, was born in 1950, and daughter, Connie, came along in 1953.

Following the sale of the Howes store, George and Garnet rented the Linell place near Faith. George taught himself welding and mechanics and obtained a job at Mastel's Garage in Faith, working there for a couple of years. Prior to purchasing the ranch in Opal, SD, in the Fall of 1954, he supported the family on his Uncle Joe's ranch in Plainview.

George and Garnet ranched for eighteen years in Opal, also renting the Tello Peterson place. They moved to Sturgis in 1971, where George formed an excavating company and later a trucking company. Together, George and Garnet retired and commenced spending winters in Arizona and Texas for five years. Garnet passed away in April of 1995.

That following fall, George continued to winter in Arizona with relatives, Wayne and Verla Lang. While in Apache Junction for the winter in 1995, George met his companion of 23 years, Violet Stunkard. He and Vi continued to travel, residing in Donna, TX, and dividing their time between Sturgis and Omaha, NE, where Vi has a home and family.

George Hlavka, 93, of Sturgis, passed away on Tuesday, January 14, 2020, from complications following heart surgery.

Among many friends (George never considered anyone a stranger) and relatives, he is survived by Vi and her extended family, as well as by daughters, Wanda (Richard) Newbrough, and Connie (Rollie Griffith) Martin. Also surviving are his grandchildren, Stacy Kopp, and her children, Brody, Riley, and Hannah of Hermosa; Stephanie (Troy) Stevens and their children, Cooper, Grace, Conner, and Camden of Gillette, WY; and Jesse (Jeanie Wirkus) Newbrough and their children, Adryana and Adilynn of Rapid City. Nieces, Shelley Erickson and Ava Love, also shared a special place in his heart, as did Vi's children, Gus (Cindy Balzer) Stunkard, Carrie (Marty) Hagge, and Alison Brewer, their children, and many great-grandchildren.

George loved his life. Death is a part of life. Thank you, God, for giving us this wonderful man for 93 years.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Sturgis Kiwanis or the Sturgis VFW. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.kinkadefunerals.com.

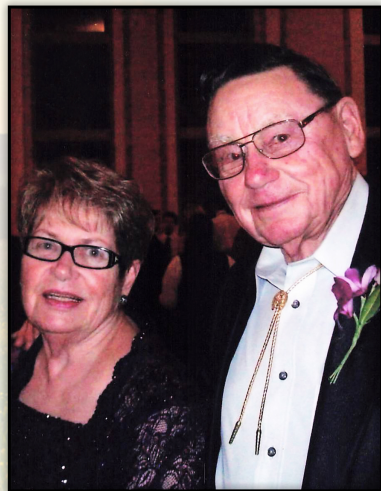
The family invites you to join them for fellowship and lunch in the church hall immediately following the committal service. We thank you for your presence and condolences.



IN LOVING MEMORY

George Rudolph Hlavka

May 31, 1926 ~ January 14, 2020



In Memory Of **George Rudolph Hlavka**

Date of Birth

May 31, 1926
Plainview, South Dakota

Date of Death

January 14, 2020
Rapid City, South Dakota

Vigil

Monday, January 20, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.
Kinkade Funeral Chapel
Sturgis, South Dakota

Mass of Christian Burial

Tuesday, January 21, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.
St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church
Sturgis, South Dakota

Officiating

Father Timothy Castor and Pastor Harold Delbridge

Special Music

"The Old Rugged Cross"
- Terri Kissack and Butch Samuelson

Musicians

Myron Volk and Dr. Barry Furze

Songs

"Amazing Grace" "One Day At A Time"
"Jesus, My Lord, My God, My All"

Pallbearers

Cooper Stevens Brody Kopp Riley Kopp
Doug Hlavka Jesse Newbrough Troy Stevens

Honorary Pallbearers

Jade Hlavka Pete Hlavka All George's Friends and Family

Military Honors

Sturgis Veteran's Honor Guard

Final Resting Place

Black Hills National Cemetery
Sturgis, South Dakota

*God saw he was getting tired
And a cure was not to be,
So He put His arms around him
And whispered, "Come with Me".
With tearful eyes we watched him suffer
And saw him fade away.
Although we loved him dearly,
We could not make him stay.
A golden heart stopped beating;
Hard working hands to rest.
God broke our hearts to prove to us
He only takes the best.*