



**Ray Alton Hunter, Jr.**

Ray, a true cowboy, was born in White River, SD, May 9, 1928, to Ray Alton Hunter, Sr., and Willynette (Hollenbeck) Hunter. Ray aspired to be a cowboy from a young age when he watched his dad wrangle buffalo for Custer State Park in the 1930s. At age eight, after his father died and the family fell on hard times, Ray was sent to live with many different families, working to earn his keep.

The cowboy life started for Ray when he when he went to live with Baxter and Lyndall Berry in 1941. He worked for the Berry Ranch off and on for thirty years and attributed his

knowledge of “cowboying and the cowboy way” to Baxter Berry.

Cowboying and ranching were his life’s passions, but he also served two years in the U.S. Marine Corps, worked construction, owned a bar in Cottonwood, auctioneered, and even ran for the state legislature.

Ray married Jean Elrod in 1950 and raised four kids in the Belvidere/Philip area.

He entered local rodeos for most of his life, putting his determination to be a top hand and riding skills to work in the arena. He later served as president of the South Dakota Rodeo Association. He loved to spend time with his kids in the arena and eventually went on to win the SDRA team roping championship with his son Casey in 1976.

One of Ray’s greatest achievements was the publication of his book “Dim Trails,” which recounts stories from his life that capture the legacy of the real west and the essence of cowboy life in early South Dakota for younger generations.

Ray remained a true cowboy to the end. He continued to attend local rodeos and show his support for the sport and cowboy lifestyle. He passed on his love of horses and the cowboy way to his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. When his grandsons were young, he told them that to be a good cowboy, they would have to learn how to drink whiskey, fight, and ride broncs. Ray defined a good cowboy as someone who could ride a bad horse and still be a good hand.

Ray Alton Hunter, Jr., 86, Sturgis, died on Thursday, October 9, 2014, at Rapid City Regional Hospital.

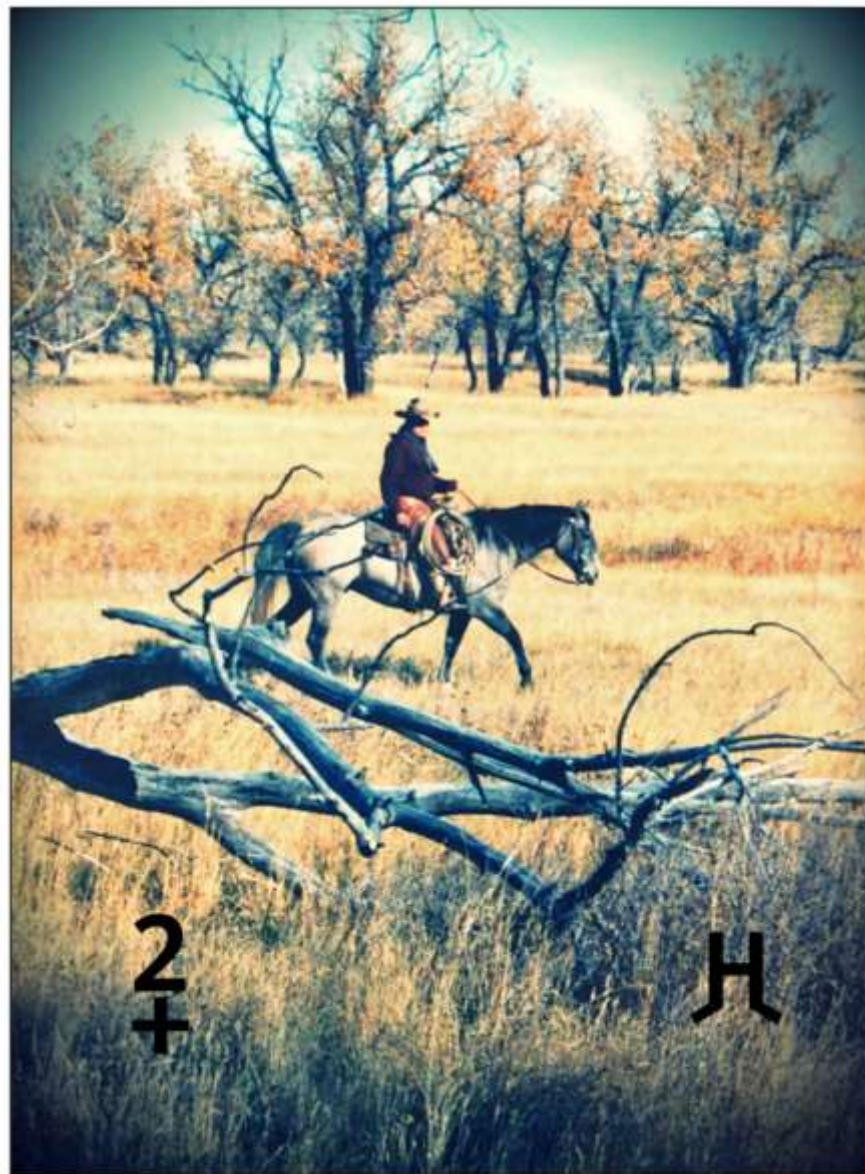
Ray is survived by his sons, Casey (Linda) Hunter, Hulett, WY, and Mike (Kim) Hunter, Huntsville, TX; daughters, Billie (Steve) Swan, Hubbard, TX, and Jackie (Dave) Driscoll, Pierre, SD; grandsons, Tracy, Troy, and Don; granddaughters, Amy, Nicole, Jamie, Meagan, Morgan, and DeAnn; great-grandsons, Liam, Nolan, Jayden, and Kyler; and great-granddaughters, Darbi, Jocelyn, Jordan, and Shayda.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Ray and Willynette; sister, Geraldine; brother, Stanley; and family friend, David Krausert.

A memorial has been established at the McCrossan Boys Ranch.



## *In Loving Memory Of*



***Ray Alton Hunter, Jr.***

***1928 ~ 2014***

*The family invites you to join them for fellowship and lunch in the Son Shine Room in the church basement immediately following the funeral service.*

*We thank you for your presence and condolences.*



### ***COWBOY'S PRAYER***

*O Lord, I've never lived where churches grow;  
I've loved creation better as it stood  
That day You finished it, so long ago  
And looked upon Your work and called it good.*

*Just let me live my life as I've begun!  
And give me work that's open to the sky;  
Make me a partner of the wind and sun,  
And I won't ask a life that's soft and high.*

*Make me as big and open as the plains;  
As honest as the horse between my knees;  
Clean as the wind that blows behind the rains;  
Free as the hawk that circles down the breeze.*

*Just keep an eye on all that's done and said;  
Just right me sometime when I turn aside;  
And guide me on the long, dim trail ahead - -  
That stretches upward towards the Great Divide.*



*In Loving Memory Of*

## ***Ray Alton Hunter, Jr.***

### ***Born***

May 9, 1928  
White River, South Dakota

### ***Died***

October 9, 2014  
Rapid City, South Dakota

### ***Funeral Service***

Monday, October 13, 2014, at 10:00 a.m.  
Grace Lutheran Church  
Sturgis, South Dakota

### ***Officiating***

Pastor Henrique Fleming  
Pastor Harold Delbridge

### ***Musicians***

Dave Wagner

### ***Musical Selections***

"Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)"  
"The Old Rugged Cross"

### ***Pallbearers***

Lyle O'Bryan ~ Stan Anderson ~ Butch Tinant  
Shorty Jones ~ Tee Ridley ~ Don Spencer

### ***Military Honors***

Sturgis Veteran's Honor Guard

### ***Interment***

Black Hills National Cemetery  
Sturgis, South Dakota