

In Loving Memory Of

William Rutherford Swan

Born

July 12, 1926
Hugo, Colorado

Died

March 22, 2016
Sturgis, South Dakota

Funeral Service

Saturday, March 26, 2016, at 2:00 p.m.
Belle Fourche Area Community Center Auditorium
Belle Fourche, South Dakota

Officiant

Pastor Sean Carney

Musical Selections

"I Know" ~ "Go Rest High On That Mountain"
"Remember When" ~ "Happy Trails"

Pallbearers

Tracy Swan ~ Amy Swan ~ Nicole Swan ~ Chad Burke
Jason Burke ~ Shannon (Burke) Haugen ~ Brett Swan
Dave Engelson ~ Amber Engelson ~ Todd Engelson
Colin Wood ~ Kenny Wood ~ Clayton Wood

Interment

Monday, March 28, 2016, at 1:00 p.m.
Black Hills National Cemetery
Sturgis, South Dakota



In Loving Memory Of

William R. "Bill" Swan

1926 ~ 2016



William R. "Bill" Swan

Bill, 89, Spearfish, longtime Newell area rancher, passed away on March 22, 2016, after a short illness, with his large and loving family at his side.

William R. "Bill" Swan was born July 12, 1926, at Hugo, CO, to W.H.C. and Elsie (Palmateer) Swan. He grew up on the Swan Ranch and was later joined by his brother, Keith, and sister, Jean. He graduated from high school in 1944 and soon joined the Navy to serve his country. After basic training, he was shipped out to the Pacific Islands where he served his country honorably.

He began courting the prettiest girl he ever met in high school, and after four years of courtship, which included her awaiting his return from overseas, he married Wilma G. Pisel on October 6, 1946, in Hugo, CO. They made their home on the Swan Ranch south of Hugo until moving to Kansas the fall of 1948, and then DeRidder, LA, to buy sheep after the ranch sold in Colorado. They then moved, along with his parents W.H.C. and Elsie, and brother, Keith, and his wife, Lois, to Newell, SD, in July of 1949. They finally moved to their ranch on Jug Creek east of Newell on May 7, 1954, where they lived until November 2001 when they retired and moved to their home near Spearfish, SD.

Bill and Wilma had a family of six children who were raised on the ranch and learned to ride and work on the ranch and love the prairie. He was an "equal opportunity" man before that became stylish and his daughters worked right along with his sons to help with the ranch work. He always expected them to behave like ladies, even though they might be covered with mud, manure or worse. He was proud of his home grown ranch crew and they learned valuable life lessons through the ranch work.

In the early years in South Dakota, Bill headed up the dipping of the thousands of sheep in the region during the scabies disease outbreak in the early '50s. During the dipping, he became acquainted with his new neighbors and made lifelong friends during that miserable time. He also rode many miles of the fenceless range looking for sheep that strayed due to the unreliability of sheep herders and rustlers. He treasured a good horse that could cover the miles at a fast walk or a lope and always sought out those leggy Thoroughbred types. He was involved in many a horse gather, some of them pretty wild, due to the ranch partnership buying outlaw and feral horses from all over the area. His all-time favorite horse of the 1950's era was a snorty, sorrel gelding named Red that could run the wild ones all day. After Red, and after several hammerheads, he started riding his horse-of-a-lifetime, Reno, a home raised buckskin gelding that many of his friends will remember.

Bill and Wilma ran cows, yearling cattle and sheep (when necessary). Bill spent many days and nights at the region's sale barns buying cattle and visiting with his sale buddies. He enjoyed the challenge of buying light and "fixer-upper" calves and making them into fat yearlings on grass. He had an eye for any animal that would make money and was usually right. The bonus of those sale barn times were the great friendships that developed and were sustained through the years.

Bill was one of the founders of the Prairie Pals 4-H Club and was the leader of that club for many years. He was heavily involved in the Butte County Fair, was on the county and state



fair boards, and enjoyed helping kids excel in 4-H. He also worked hard at putting on 4-H rodeos and was the rodeo announcer at many 4-H and youth rodeos.

He was a leader of the Newell Saddle Club and enjoyed the playdays and events that entailed until his kids were all grown up. Newell Labor Day was another of his favorite things and he did everything from sort bucking stock to flagging until he became the announcer of the rodeo, a job he held and enjoyed for decades. Even after "retiring" from announcing, he attended every Labor Day celebration in Newell.

Though Bill was involved in many activities outside of the ranch, he dedicated himself most intensely to loving Wilma. They were the best of friends and they never ceased to not only love each other, but to be in love with each other. For over 50 years, Bill made the coffee in the morning and took a cup to Wilma in bed after he was done shaving. From there they planned out the day ahead and had some quiet time without interruption. His devotion to her and respect for her never ceased, even after she was gone.

In the 1990's, Bill and Wilma got a small motor home and started traveling. They enjoyed trips all over the country, taking in draft horse sales in Iowa, music shows in Branson, MO, and mule days at both Ralston, WY, and Bishop, CA. He visited and loved Venice Beach, CA, of all places. They enjoyed looking at pretty country together and toured many of the national parks all over the west. They also visited relatives and old friends on their trips. All of the grandkids college graduations and weddings also warranted trips. They continued to travel after they retired and up until Wilma's health prevented it.

Bill never met a stranger and enjoyed visiting with people of every description. He was a master of the telling of a story and could make one feel as if they were there in the moment. He could see the funny side of most situations and had a very positive attitude about life in general. One of his favorite sayings was "It's a great life if you don't weaken."

After moving to Spearfish, Bill had more time for his social activities and got acquainted with people all over the Spearfish community. If someone said they saw him it was usually in Walmart, where he enjoyed sitting on a bench and people watching. He always had a good word for everyone and liked to share his Dove dark chocolates. He was a friend, Dad, and Grandad to many besides his own family and had friends everywhere.

Bill, 89, Spearfish, longtime Newell area rancher, passed away on March 22, 2016, after a short illness, with his large and loving family at his side.

Survivors include his children, Steve and Billie Swan, Hubbard, TX, Kathy and Bob Burke, Sundance, WY, Dave Swan, Los Angeles, CA (and Aladdin WY), Linda Swan and Brett Engelson, Rapid City, SD, Bob and Christy Swan, Belle Fourche, SD, and Jan and Bill Wood, Newell, SD; 14 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren; sister, Jean and Hank Langeman, Wenatchee, WA; sister-in-law, Lois Swan, Newell, SD; sister-in-law, Myrna and Dale Ashcraft, Matheson, CO; and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and dear friends.

He was preceded in death by his sweetheart, Wilma in 2010; his parents; his brother, Keith; his in-laws, William and Valley Pisel; and grandson, Carson Gifford.

A memorial has been established to Shriner's Hospitals for Children to benefit children with cleft palates, as was his fondest wish.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.kinkadefunerals.com.

The family invites you to join them for fellowship and lunch at the community center following the funeral service. We thank you for your presence and condolences.