

Ken was born on October 03, 1957, to Lydia (Kamstra) and Herbert Gatzke in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Ken was raised on a farm west of New England, N.D. Playing basketball in high school for the New England Tigers taught him the value of teamwork. Graduation from high school in 1975 was followed by farming with his brother, Dale, and his dad.

Ken married his high school sweetheart, Collette Hecker, on October 22, 1977. They moved to Newell, S.D., that fall. They were blessed with one son, Aaron, and one daughter, Debbie. Ken and his brother, Dale, had a wheat farm northeast of Newell. They operated Gatzke Farms together for many years.

After they sold the farm, Ken bought a semi-truck and worked for Tri Mac in Rapid City, S.D., hauling lime, coal, and gravel. In 2011 Ken bought his own set of gravel trailers in order to haul gravel for Martin Construction during the big Bakken Oil Boom in Dickinson, N.D. When the oil boom slowed down in 2014, Ken and Collette moved back to Piedmont where he continued his work for Tri Mac. After leaving Tri Mac in 2023, he purchased his own set of belly dump trailers to haul fracking sand in Wyoming until his retirement in November 2023.

Ken's greatest hobby was building and flying radio-controlled airplanes. At one time, he belonged to three different flying clubs. Competing in RC flying shows and flying with his air-show team was a favorite part of his flying hobby. The planes would drop candy to cheering crowds of spectators.

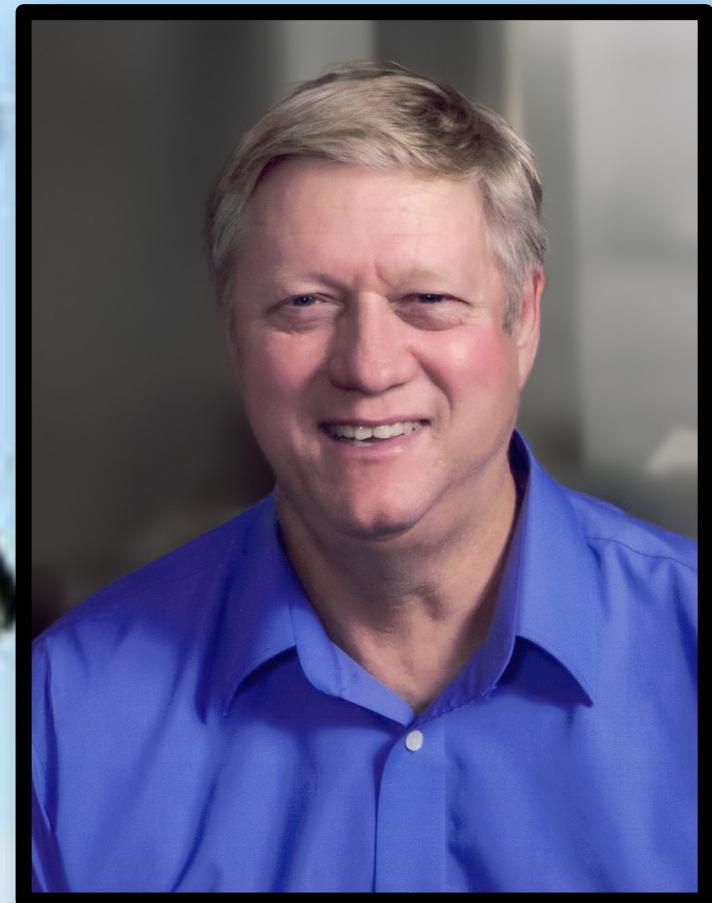
One of his greatest joys was spending time with his grandchildren: playing marbles, card games, and monopoly. Ken and Collette shared many pastimes together; dancing in their living room to their favorite music, going on long walks, watching movies, and traveling to see family.

Ken passed away at home on December 13th, 2024. Ken is survived by his wife, Collette, of Piedmont, S.D.; his son, Aaron (Megan) Gatzke of Colorado Springs; his daughter, Debbie (Desmond) Watson of Spearfish; his grandchildren - Lily Whittaker, Heidi Gatzke, Trudi Gatzke, Seth Gatzke, Sadie Gatzke, Noel Gatzke, and Aurora Gatzke - his Brother Dale Gatzke of Rapid City; his brother Steven Gatzke (Kathy) of Newell, S.D.; and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his sister, Kathy Neilson; his parents, Herbert and Lydia Gatzke; and his sister-in-law, Malinda Gatzke.

Condolences for the family may be sent to [www.kinkadefunerals.com](http://www.kinkadefunerals.com).

## ***In Loving Memory Of***



***Kenneth H. Gatzke***

***October 3, 1957 ~ December 13, 2024***

## Farewell Prayer

“Thank you Lord for seeing how weary I am, and letting me rest. The pain is gone; the peace is beautiful, Your love surrounds me. I have fought the good fight (I think) and somehow now at this stage, no matter what the outcome, I feel I have won.”



Thank you for your presence and condolences.



## *In Loving Memory Of* **Kenneth Henry Gatzke**

### Born

October 3, 1957  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

### Died

December 13, 2024  
Piedmont, South Dakota

### Funeral Service

Friday, December 20, 2024 at 11:00  
Shiloh Church  
Black Hawk, South Dakota

### Officiant

Pastor Jon Langness

### Musical Selections

“In Christ Alone”  
“Jesus, Strong & Kind”  
“How Great Thou Art”

### Musicians

Corri Bliese & Pastor Andy Coyle

### Pallbearers

Allen Hecker	Ayana Hecker
Ron Hecker	Nathan Hofer
Brandon Gatzke	James Gatzke

### Honorary Pallbearers

All of his grandchildren -  
Lily Whittaker Heidi Gatzke Trudi Gatzke  
Seth Gatzke Sadie Gatzke Noel Gatzke Aurora Gatzke

### Final Resting Place

Piedmont Cemetery  
Piedmont, South Dakota