



Donald Eugene Ericson

Donald Eugene Ericson was born June 26, 1942, to Gene and Annie (Freed) Ericson. He was delivered by a midwife and was small enough to be taken home in a shoe box. Don died Tuesday, April 28, 2015, at home with his family at his side.

Don grew up on the family ranch south of Nisland. He attended rural schools and graduated from Newell High School. Upon graduation, he attended SDSM&T and graduated from BHSU with his teaching degree. Following graduation, Don accepted a teaching position with Meade 46-1 as a "starting point." 43 years later he retired, having

taught math, science, electronics, geology, archaeology, and paleontology. Don was one of the original teachers at the Sturgis Academy and spent many additional hours tutoring students either at the dining room table or his favorite spot on the floor in his home. In 2008, Don was honored as teacher of the year.

In 1964, he married his first love and best friend, Gerie Goddard (ask Gerie about the wedding video – she literally fell head over heels for him). Don was an elder in the Church of Christ and attended the Sturgis congregation. One highlight for him was baptizing both of his grandsons.

Don was involved in many activities through the years. He served on the board of directors for the Newell and Fort Meade Museums. He was an active member of the Sturgis Fire Department for many years and also worked for the Sturgis Police Department in the summer for several years. He was an avocational archaeologist doing volunteer research for the BLM and South Dakota Archaeology Research Center. He achieved his goal of being the first to discover and record a prehistoric site, which he named "The Bucket List Site." Don owned his own communication business and also had an amateur radio operator's license.

He is survived by Gerie, his wife of 50 years; son, Jay and his wife, Laura, of Nisland, SD; daughter, DeeAnna Opstedahl and her husband, Jon, of Dickinson, ND; two grandsons, Gabe and Greg Opstedahl; sister, Barbara Kapinos and her husband, Kip, of Bozeman, MT; mother-in-law, Anna Goddard of Sturgis; brothers-in-law, Tom (Betty) Goddard of Sturgis and Monte (Tarrie) Goddard of Sturgis; sister-in-law, Lavina Goddard of Sturgis; and numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews. Don is also survived by his church family.

He was preceded in death by his mother and father; father-in-law, Forrest Goddard; brother-in-law, Marshall Goddard; his grandparents; and several uncles and aunts.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial has been established.

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



In Loving Memory Of

Donald E. Ericson

1942 ~ 2015



*God saw he was getting tired
and a cure was not to be
So He put His arms around him
And whispered "come to 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
Hardworking hands to rest
God broke our hearts to prove to us
He takes the very best.*

In Loving Memory Of

Donald Eugene Ericson

Born

June 26, 1942
Sturgis, South Dakota

Died

April 28, 2015
Sturgis, South Dakota

Funeral Service

Saturday, May 2, 2015, at 2:00 p.m.
Church of Christ
Sturgis, South Dakota

Officiant

Ron Ledford

Song Leader ~ Dean Adams

Musical Selections

"Precious Memories" "I'll Fly Away"
"I'll Live In Glory"
"This World Is Not My Home"

Pallbearers

Jon Opstedahl ~ Keith Keffeler ~ Ken Lueck
Doug Thomas ~ Todd Meints ~ Dean Mahaffy

Honorary Pallbearers

Gabe Opstedahl ~ Greg Opstedahl
And All Family and Friends

Interment

Bear Butte Cemetery
Sturgis, South Dakota

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