



Don H. Christensen

October 20, 1932 - September 14, 2014

Don H. Christensen, age 81, of Spirit Lake, Iowa, passed away on Sunday September 14, 2014 at Lakes Regional Healthcare in Spirit Lake. Funeral services will be 10:30 am Thursday at First Lutheran Church in West Okoboji. Private family burial will be in Old Buck Cemetery near Albert City. Visitation will be 5:00 - 7:00 pm Wednesday at the Schuchert-Lentz Funeral Home in Spirit Lake, with a 7:00 pm Masonic Service.

Don was born on October 20, 1932 on a farm north of Newell, Iowa to Clarence Peter and Rosy (Haahr) Christensen. He was baptized and confirmed at the Nain Lutheran Church in Newell. Don began his schooling at Newell and moved with the family to a farm south of Marathon, in the middle of his 9th grade year. His athletic record included four years of football, basketball and baseball. He made all conference end on the gridiron, all-state honors in both basketball and football and pitched Marathon to the sectional baseball championship in 1949. Musically, Don had four years of glee club, chorus and boys quartette, two years mixed quartette and madrigal, won division I for vocal solo in state music contest. He was both high school newspaper editor and student council president his senior year. Don was in the junior and senior class plays and was senior class vice president. He was the valedictorian of his 1950 graduating class at Marathon High School. Don then went on to Morningside College in Sioux City where he was given a full scholarship and invited to play basketball and football for the legendary George Allen, who would go on to be a Hall of Fame coach in the NFL. Don and coach Allen would remain in contact for many years.

While at Morningside to pursue his 4 years of pre-dentistry classes, his father became ill so Don returned to the family farm. He then was called to serve his country during the Korean War, April 2, 1953. Inducted at Omaha his next training was at Fort Sill, OK. From there on to Japan and finally assigned to the personnel section of Headquarters Btry with the 999 Armored Field Artillery Battalion as office supervisor. Don received his Honorable Discharge March 31, 1955 at Fort Carson, CO and boarded a fast train back to farm 50/50 with his mother.

On December 27, 1958, Don married Marlene Janel Brechwald, the love of his life, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Alta, Iowa. They made their home on the farm, enjoying their family and then retired, building a new home on West Lake Okoboji in 1998. They would have been married 56 years this coming December. Husband and devoted father, Don's first priority was always his family. In his later years, he thoroughly enjoyed his grandchildren. His wisdom and guidance were always appreciated and he will be dearly missed by all those who knew and loved him.

Don loved his Lord and gladly served Him as a member of Our Saviors Lutheran Church in Albert City and First Lutheran Church in West Okoboji. He helped on church boards and committees as well as serving wherever he was needed over the years. An active member of the communities where he lived, Don was elected to serve advisory positions with schools, AC elevator coops, nursing homes, county groups, DeKalb AgResearch, Pioneer-Dupont Corp and others. He was a seed salesman for 38 years and also sold nursery products for Elmore Nursery, MN for 13 years. Don loved to travel and search for antiques they could use in their home. Don enjoyed sports with his sons and grandchildren and also getting together with friends and neighbors. He also enjoyed all types of music, and especially enjoyed Rock and Roll music at the park with Marlene.

Left to cherish his memory is his wife, Marlene, of Spirit Lake; son, dentist, Dr. Steve and Jane of Okoboji and son, farmer, seed sales, Kirk and Karla of Albert City; grandchildren, David of Marathon, Daniel of Minneapolis, MN, Katelyn of Storm Lake, Grace and Tyler Smith of West Des Moines and Nicholas of Okoboji; and extended family and a host of friends. Don was preceded in death by his parents and 4 sisters, Marion, Marjorie, Gwen, and his twin sister Donna.

Comments



“ Our thoughts and prayers to Don's entire family. Steve, we know our dads share the beauty of life eternal. We are thinking of you all in what is a time of reflection and remembrance. God's Peace.

Randy and Marilyn Schmitt, Fonda - September 18, 2014 at 09:24 PM



“ I will miss Uncle Don dressing up as Santa Clause during our wonderful family Christmas celebrations. Don & Marlene are my God Parents and have always opened there home to me with loving arms.

Lisa Johnson - September 17, 2014 at 11:29 PM



“ It was a highlight of my childhood when we would travel the 8hrs from our home in Dixon,Il to visit my great grandma Rosy and her family. We couldn't wait to visit Uncle Don & Aunt Marlene on the family farm & later at their cabin on the lake!! Uncle Don was a great man who will missed by all & never forgotton!!My condolences go out to Aunt Marlene and family.

Jeff Ackert (son of Bonnie Bingham) - September 17, 2014 at 03:37 PM



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Marilyn Rowe - September 17, 2014 at 01:06 PM



“ Dear Marlene and family-

I'm so sorry to hear about your loss of Don. I will always remember Don as a member of our other "Christensen" family. I have many fond memories of the farm and time at your lake home. Don was Santa for us and our cousins when we were little. I will always remember that.

Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Sara Evans (Christenson) - September 17, 2014 at 01:03 PM



“ Dear Marlene & Family - The Don we know & love is the Lord's servant. Don & Marlene have always been willing to step up to help in the hospitality area of the church, being faithful and most gracious greeters in welcoming people to worship. The compassion they have for others is heartwarming. Now we send our support and love to you, Don's family. In Christ's Love, Jack & Sue Parkins

Jack & Sue Parkins - September 17, 2014 at 08:47 AM



“ As mentioned by others, Bob & I met Don & Marlene through the mutual love of Rock & Roll. In short order we fell in love with this WONDERFUL couple. They opened thier BEAUTIFUL home to us as visitors & guests during the IRRMA induction weekends & beyond. What WONDERFUL hosts they were:-) :-) :-) :-) Don with his infamous wisdom will be sorely missed. May you rest in peace DEAR friend. To Marlene, Steve, Kirk & families: DEEPEST SYMPATHIES TO YOU ALL. God Bless. OCEANS OF LOVE Bob & Ann Harrison

September 16, 2014 at 06:47 PM



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Ray and Marge Anderson - September 16, 2014 at 04:23 PM



“ My Dear Marlene and Family, Don was my idol, hero, and wonderful friend. His gentleness was nurtured by his love for Marlene and his family. His dedication and devotion was unequaled. It's time I say goodbye to you Don. I loved you and will miss you. I know you are dancing with our Lord. It's with great sadness I give my sympathy to you Marlene and to your family. Love to you and yours.

John Walz - September 16, 2014 at 10:10 AM



“ We met Don & Marlene through our mutual love of Rock & Roll music. When they walked in to the Roof Garden everything just came to life. They were always friendly, funny, gracious and kind. They stood out in the crowd. We can't talk about one without talking about the other-they were one. We are so grateful to God for placing them in our lives. Don had a presence, he was a beautiful soul. He will be missed by many. Marlene and family, please accept our sincerest sympathies. Marlene, hugs to you. Jim & Jan Rusk

Jan Rusk - September 16, 2014 at 08:47 AM



“ Don was a very unique individual. It was obvious that his personality showed the love he had for his wife and family. He cherished his friends and there were no strangers in his life. The hospitality in their home gave a visitor the most welcoming feeling. We shared both happy times and times of health concerns when prayers were so important. We had a common bond for the love of pets especially cats. His Christian faith reflected how much he knew that God loved him and God was his Master. Bless the memory of Don. Our love and condolences to Marlene and his family.

Carolyn and John Walz - September 15, 2014 at 08:47 PM