

Roger Gaer, 76 ✓**June 11, 1938 - June 18, 2014**

PIERRE, SD — Roger Dale Gaer was born to Lester Dale Gaer and Bernadine Christensen Gaer on June 11, 1938 in Shelby County. Over the course of his childhood, Roger worked diligently on the family farm, pranked the neighbor (who just so happened to be his uncle) by tipping over the outhouse (more than once), raced his 56 red and white Ford on the back county roads, and enjoyed his time with his two sisters, brother, and family.



One night in 1958, Roger was attending a small town basketball game and after noticing the blond guard on the court, he decided he was going to date that girl. In November 1959, Roger was united in marriage to that girl, Carole Jean Guth. This union was blessed with seven children over the next 14 years. In these early years, Roger and Carole farmed, raised hogs, and operated a dairy in Iowa. Even with being busy raising their children, they were still very active in 4-H and riding clubs, square danced on horses, participated in trail rides and coon hunted with their mule, Buck, and dog, Sugar. Roger also competed in horse shows; his competitors knew when he showed up with his horse Honey, they were going home with something less than 1st place.

In 1978, the Gaer family relocated to the Ft Pierre area of South Dakota. For the next 30 years Roger was involved with ranching, raising horses, driving truck and working at the Fort Pierre sale barn until settling on an acreage south of Ft Pierre with his daughter and son-in-law. To those who knew Roger, it's no secret that his love for horses was a highlight to his existence, second only to his family. This started at a young age with his first pony Roy which led to a lifelong pursuit of living the cowboy way. Over the years, Roger was fortunate to have spent time in the saddle with family and friends. With great pride, Roger rode as an outrider on the Fort Pierre to Deadwood Trail Ride at the age of 70 with his brother and a few grandchildren, all riding horses that he had raised. Being married for nearly 55 years, Roger and Carole's world revolved around their children and grandchildren and horses, determined to make a legacy for future generations to cherish. Roger received great joy in knowing that his children were successful in their endeavors and happy with the trails they have taken. His passion for horses was shared with his wife and passed onto their children which has led to countless stories and adventures. His life's effort has established an impressive herd of the "perfect horse" that are "too nice to sell" but he was always willing to give half interest to one of his children or grandkids. He died June 18, 2014 at Avera St. Mary's Hospital at age 76.

Roger was preceded in death by his dad Lester, son-in-law Ronnie Heckenlaible, sister-in-law Delores Petersen, brothers-in-law: Gary Erb and Art Chapin; and his paternal and maternal grandparents. He is survived by his wife Carole; seven kids: Larry Gaer, LaDonna (Bill) Hupp, Mike Gaer, Joanne Heckenlaible; Karla (Dennis) Maier, Dave (LeeAnn) Gaer, and Rocky (John) Heezen; 24 grandkids; 6 great-grandkids: Steven, Donny (Alison), Casey (Bobbijo-Julia and Trystan), Eli, Cass (Mike-Devin and Mason), Trevor, Tarin, Jacey, Jessie (Roger-Brooklinn, Brecken, and Brenna), Joey, Ethan (fiance Lenai), Cody, Hailey, Ashlyn, Colton, Tyler, Tori, Tucker, Taylor, Brady (Karisa-Quintin), Kylie, Kaden, Dalyn and Cheznie; his mother Bernadine; three siblings: Arden Chapin; Janice (Leo) Madsen; Galen Gaer; sister-in-law Mryna (Bernie) Gundel; brother-in-law Arlo Petersen; and many more relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, June 24, 2014, at Lutheran Memorial Church with burial in the Scotty Phillip Cemetery, all in Pierre, SD.