

January 14, 2010

The Life of Eugene Abeln

The funeral for Eugene Abeln, 82, of Groton will be Friday, January 15, 2 p.m., at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Groton. The Rev. Mike Kelly will officiate. Burial with military honors will follow in Groton Union Cemetery.

- Visitation will be held at the chapel from 4-8 p.m. today with a prayer service at 7 p.m.
- Gene died January 11, 2010 at Golden Living Center, Groton.
- Eugene was born August 7, 1927 in Aberdeen to Vera (Troy) and Edwin Abeln. He attended country grade school and graduated from Groton High School in 1945. Gene farmed for one year before entering the U.S. Marine Corp. He served from 1946 to 1948 and was discharged as a corporal. On June 12, 1948 he united in marriage with Virginia Pratt of Groton at the Mare Island Naval Base in Vallejo, California. The couple re



turned home, where Gene attended South Dakota State University and later Northern State University. In 1950, Gene became a Standard Oil agent in Groton. For a number of years, he did on-the-job training for future Standard Oil agents for the company. After 23 years, he purchased the bulk oil business from Amoco Oil, which he operated until his son, Neal took over in 1990.

- During his life in the Groton area, Gene was active in many organizations and events in the community. He served on the City Council and was a 50 year charter member of the Groton Kiwanis Club, serving twice as President. He was also part of the Groton Development Committee and Olive Grove Golf Course charter development committee. Gene was a member of the Groton Catholic Church and served on the council for several years. During that time, he spent many years working as chairman of the Groton Ice Carnival, Groton Harvest Festival and Groton Snow Queen Contest. He also acted as Vice-Chairman of the Groton 75th Anniversary and co-chairman of the City's 100th Celebration. He always tried to give something back to the community that he loved and lived in all his life.
- Gene enjoyed planning trips, traveling, bowling, golfing, snowmobiling, hunting, camping, and being with friends. Many will remember him for his hardy laugh.
- Grateful for having shared in his life is his wife, Virginia; three children, Peggy

Abeln of Aberdeen, David Abeln of Rapid City, Neal (Wynella) Abeln of Groton; five grandchildren, Branden (April) Abeln, Lacey (Tim) Grabow, Brock Abeln, Vanessa Abeln, Kacy Abeln and his great-grandson, Tevin Abeln.

- Preceding him in death were his parents and one brother, Alvin.
- Honorary Casketbearers will be Duane Neumann, Leo Kersting, Bob Johnson, Robert Snyder, Dale McGannon, Wally Fischer, Chuck Raap, Richard Kolker and Kiwanis members past and present.
- Casketbearers will be Dick Seuer, Gordan Sieh, Clayton Sternhagen, Larry Schelle, Tom Mahan and Harlan Drube.
- The family would like to express their sincere appreciation to the staff at Golden Living Center for their dedication and care shown to Eugene over the past three years.