

June 16, 2007

Fritz Lahman

- Services for Fritz Lahman, 97, Hecla, SD, are 11:00 am, Monday, June 18 at St. John's Lutheran Church in Hecla with Pastor Ryan Mutzenberger, United Methodist Church, presiding. Fritz died Thursday, June 14 at Avera St. Luke's Hospital.
- Visitation: 1-7pm Sunday at Spitzer-Miller Funeral Home, 1111 S. Main St. with a prayer service at 7pm. Additional visitation one hour prior to the service at St. John's Lutheran Church in Hecla.
- Fritz Conrad Lahman was born on August 2, 1909 on a farm east of Hecla,. His parents were Edward and Dora (Everett) Lahman. He was the second youngest of 11 children. He attended Johnson Country school, and lived in the Hecla area all his 97 years.



- In 1928, Fritz and his brother Bill, built an automobile repair shop in Hecla. He also farmed area and ran a custom harvesting business. In the 1940's he began to invent a haystack moving machine utilizing old truck parts. His business, Lahman Manufacturing Company, expanded from a one machine at a time operation to a large manufacturing factory, employing over 100 people in Hecla and producing over 200 haystack movers per year.
- He ran his business along with his beloved wife Arlyne Wright whom he married on November 4, 1951. They sold haystack movers all across the plain states and the upper Midwest. Fritz later invented and manufactured a front end loader called the Little Dipper. One of Fritz's greatest joys was taking his entire staff and their spouses on expense paid trips to such places as Minneapolis, Las Vegas, California, and Hawaii. Fritz is the father of two children, Linda and Neil. Together the family traveled throughout the United States and around the world.
- Through the years, Fritz continued to work at his "shop" despite economic difficulties, the death of his wife, and multiple health problems. He finally sold the business and retired in 1996. During retirement Fritz maintained a garage at his home where he repaired machinery and invented numerous gadgets. He also found much joy in spending time with his family, gardening, harvesting his apple trees, and playing with his dog, Molly. He was a Mason and a Shriner.
- Grateful for having shared his life are his daughter, Linda (Kevin) McMaster, Wichita, KS; his son Neil (Lisa) Lahman, Sioux Falls, SD; his grandchildren Patrick, Colin, and Andrea McMaster, and Anthony, Derek, and Nicholas Lahman, his caregivers, extended family and friends. He is preceded in death by his wife Arlyne, his parents, three brothers, and six sisters.
- In recent years Fritz smilingly stated the following: "If I had my life to live out, I believe I'd take the same route". The family prefers memorials to Britton Area Hospice, Britton, SD 57430.