

January 14, 2008

The Life of Jay Swisher

- Services for Jay Swisher, 86, of Groton will be 10:30 am, Tuesday, January 15th at the United Methodist Church, Groton. Pastor Jan Price will officiate. Burial will follow at Huffton Cemetery under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton. Military honors will be provided by the Groton American Legion Post #39.
- Visitation will be held at the church on Monday from 4-8pm with a prayer service at 7:00pm. Visitation will continue for one hour prior to services on Tuesday.
- Jay died January 11, 2008 at Avera St. Lukes Hospital in Aberdeen.
- Jay Charles Swisher was born June 1, 1921, to Ralph and Edna (Chaussee) in Vermillion, South Dakota. He graduated from Vermillion High School in 1939 and University of South Dakota in 1942. He was in the United States



Army from 1941 through 1946, serving in the European Theater in the Battle of the Bulge and the Ardens. He was a member of the 27th Infantry of the 9th Armored Division. On March 1, 1945, he was wounded. For his service, he received a Purple Heart and a Unit Bronze Star.

- On March 10, 1944, he united in marriage to Mary Clark at her home in Putney, South Dakota. Following his discharge from the Army, they began farming in the Putney area in 1946. Jay's life was marked by his love of family, agriculture, and service to his community. As a farmer and rancher for over 60 years, he was active in cattle feeding, horse breeding, confinement hog raising, the breeder of purebred Normande cattle and ranched in Forbes, North Dakota. He was also in the lumber business, elevator business, and the Groton Truck Center.

- Jay was a member of the South Dakota Livestock Feeders (National Delegate and State Executive Board), the Beef Industry Council's Executive Board, and was on the Board of Directors for the National Cattlemen Association in 1976. He served on the National Cattlemen's Promotion and Research Board (Check-off), and was President of the American Normande Association for six years. He was instrumental in starting the Dakota Classic Cutting Horse Futurity, put on 4-H horse riding schools, and was a member of the South Dakota Quarter Horse Association. He was a member of the South Dakota House of Representatives from 1966 to 1967 and was a member of the South Dakota Building Authority for seven years. He

served on the State Board of Trustees for the United Methodist Church for 20 years, was on the Administrative Board at the Methodist church in Groton, and taught Sunday School.

- In 1988, Jay was appointed Secretary of Agriculture by Governor George S. Mickelson and served for 6 ½ years. During that time, he served as President of the Midwest Association for Secretaries of Department of Agriculture (MASDA) and was a member of the National Association of Secretaries of Department of Agriculture (NASDA). He was a charter member of the Tri-State Consortium. In 1994, he was honored at South Dakota State University's Beef Bowl with the "Friend of the Beef Industry" Award.

- As a member of the community, Jay was on the board to establish the Bookmobile in Brown County, on the building committee for both the Groton swimming pool and the nursing home and was a substitute teacher in the Groton School District. He was a member of the Groton Kiwanis since 1964 and served as chairman of the Brown County Republican Party for two years. He also served on the Special People Using Riding Skills (SPURS) Board and the Claremont Township Board. He was a member of the Elks Club, the American Legion, and the Groton Masonic Lodge #65.

- Grateful for having shared in his life are his wife, Mary of Groton; and their five children: Linda (Art) Gengerke of Groton; Jean (Jim) Kramer of Aberdeen; Lanny (Dynee) Swisher of Spearfish; Bob (Renee) Swisher of Groton; and Bill (Barb) Swisher of Fort Pierre; 14 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild, and many nieces and nephews.

- Preceding him in death were his parents and brother, Clark Swisher.

- Casketbearers will be Collin Gengerke, Trent Kramer, Tim Swisher, Mike Swisher, Matt Swisher, Travis Swisher, John T. Clark, and Alex Prissel.

Jay Swisher, 86

Jay Swisher, 86, Groton died Friday, Jan. 11, 2008 at Avera St. Luke's Hospital, Aberdeen.

His funeral was Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2008 at the United Methodist Church, Groton, with Pastor Jan Price officiating. Burial followed in Huffton Cemetery, with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton, in charge of arrangements. Military honors were provided by the Groton American Legion Post #39. prayer service was held at the church Monday evening.



Jay Charles Swisher was born June 1, 1921 to Ralph and Edna (Chaussee) Swisher, Vermillion, SD. He graduated from Vermillion High School in 1939 and the University of South Dakota in 1942. He was in the United States Army, 1941-46, serving in the European Theater in the Battle of the Bulge and the Ardens. He was a member of the 27th Infantry of the 9th Armored Division. He was wounded March 1, 1945. For his service, he received a Purple Heart and a Unit Bronze Star.

He united in marriage with Mary Clark at her home in Putney, SD, March 10, 1944. After his discharge from the Army, they began farming in the Putney area in 1946. Jay's life was marked by his love of family, agriculture and service to his community. As a farmer and rancher for over 60 years, he was active in cattle feeding, horse breeding, confinement hog raising, the breeder of purebred Normande cattle, and ranched in Forbes, ND. He was also in the lumber business, elevator business, and the Groton Truck Center.

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Preceding him in death were his parents and one brother, Clark Swisher.

Casketbearers were Collin Gengerke, Trent Kramer, Tim Swisher, Mike Swisher, Matt Swisher, Travis Swisher, John T. Clark, and Alex Prissel. Soloist was Pam Hanson and organist was Yvonne Lange.