

Feb. 7, 2012

The Life of Clayton Sternhagen

The funeral for Clayton Sternhagen, 73, of Groton was held Saturday, February 4 at the First Presbyterian Church, Groton. The Rev. Terry Kenny officiated. Burial followed in Union Cemetery.

Clayton died February 1, 2012 at his residence in Groton.

Clayton Thomas was born on September 5, 1938 in Dante, SD to Tom and Lillian (Obr) Sternhagen. He attended country school and graduated from Avon High School in 1956. Following graduation, he enlisted in the US



Army and spent most of his time in the Washington, D.C. area with a Nike missile unit. After his honorable discharge, he worked as a Ford mechanic in Albert Lea, Minnesota. On July 21, 1961, he married his high school sweetheart, Marie Hento in Springfield. In August of that year, they moved to Groton, where Clayton worked for 42 years at Pioneer Ford.

Clayton was a volunteer EMT Rescue squad member for 20 years and was very active in the Presbyterian Church, serving as Trustee and Elder.

He enjoyed motor cycling, snowmobiling, restoring cars and tractors. Clayton especially enjoyed trips with family and friends to the Black Hills. After his retirement, he and Marie traveled across the United States. He stayed very active attending grandchildren's sports, music and theater activities. He also loved hunting, fishing and coffee time with his friends.

Celebrating his life is his wife of 50 years, Marie; one son, Craig (Jodi) Sternhagen of Groton; three daughters, Rhonda (Doug) Swanson of Aberdeen, Pam Sternhagen of Groton, Kris (Jared) Barger of Madison; his step-mother, Polly Sternhagen of Avon; his sister, Margo Nedved of Rapid City; step-sister, Vicky (Tom) Pileggi of Rochester, Minnesota and ten grandchildren.

Preceding him in death were his parents, Tom & Lillian Sternhagen. Honorary casketbearers were all of Clayton's friends.

Casketbearers were Laker Thompson, Tom Sternhagen, Luke Sternhagen, Jerick Hanson, Doug Swanson and Jared Barger.