



Richard Wayne "Dick" Rathje

September 19, 1931 - December 30, 2017

Richard Wayne "Dick" Rathje, 86, of Phillips passed away on Saturday, December 30, 2017.

Service and celebration of Dick's life will be at 11:00 a.m. Saturday at St. Pauls Lutheran Church. Reverend William Pavuk will officiate. It was Dick's wish to have his body donated to science upon his death. Burial will be in the Phillips Cemetery.

A gathering of friends and family will be from 5-7 p.m. Friday at Phillips Community Center.

Dick was born September 19, 1931 in rural Phillips to Herbert and Minnie (Bartz) Rathje. He grew up in Phillips, graduating from Phillips High School with the class of 1949. He joined the United States Coast Guard in 1951. Serving during the Korean War, he was honorably discharged in April of 1953. On November 8, 1953, Dick married Gerre Rose Benner at St. Pauls Lutheran Church. Dick took over his father's farm near Phillips, farming and feeding cattle. Entrepreneur and jack-of-all-trades, Dick was a builder, carpenter and collector. A few years ago, he spearheaded the restoration of the Phillips Jail. He has been a past member of the Phillips Lions, the Eagles, T-Bone Board of NE Livestock Feeders Assoc., St. Pauls Lutheran Church Council in various positions, the Liederkrantz, the Platt Duetsche and the American Legion. Dick was also president of the Phillips Cemetery Board.

Those left to cherish his memory include his children, Teresa (Chip) Howell of Lincoln, Rick (Kay) Rathje of Roseland, Jim (Nancy) Rathje of Grand Island,

Brenda (Mike) Shipwright of Overland Park, KS and Cindy Braun of Lincoln; sister, Virginia Dahms of Omaha; fifteen grandchildren; eighteen great-grandchildren; brother-in-law, Phil Spiehs; and sisters-in-law, Barbara Benner and Doris Djernes.

He was welcomed into heaven by his parents; his wife, Gerre; daughter-in-law, Kathy Rathje; and son-in-law, Rick Braun; sister, Imogene Falmlen; brother, Donald Rathje; sisters-in-law, Lillian Brostrom and Betty Spiehs; and brothers-in-law, George Falmlen, Ronald Benner and Ralph Brostrom.

Memorials are suggested to the Dick and Gerre Rathje Medical Scholarship Fund endowed through St. Pauls Lutheran Church.

Cemetery Details

Phillips Cemetery

Phillips, NE

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service

JAN 6. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Pauls Lutheran Church
1515 South Harrison Street
Grand Island, NE 68801

Tribute Wall



“ *Richard Wayne "Dick" Rathje*

October 08, 2023 at 11:02 PM



“ *Please accept my condolences for your loss. He was a asset to his family and friends as well as an asset and role model for the Phillips community.*

Michalynn Wagner - January 07, 2018 at 04:09 AM



“ *Our deepest sympathy and prayers go out to your family. I remember visiting the farm as a child and Dick was always a very quiet, calm, and hard working man; fond memories to reflect. May God comfort you during this time.*
Jan (Wabel)) Beery

Jan Beery - January 06, 2018 at 08:45 AM



“ *Dear Rathje Family, I was always very fond of Dick. He was one of the calmer, quieter voices at any Liebsack family event (family members know what I mean!). He was so kind and welcoming when we visited the farm and I can still see him sitting back and smiling while my mother (Aunt Frieda) and cousin Gerre would be yakking away.. i hope you all can reflect on the happy times as you gather at this time.*

Kris Davenport Burke

Kris Burke - January 05, 2018 at 08:02 AM

RS

“ Ricard and I wish to extend our deepest Sympathy , You are in our thoughts and Prayers at this difficult time..

Richard Schmidt - January 04, 2018 at 01:44 PM

CH

“ Sorry we won't be able to attend Uncle Dicks funeral. We are in Texas for the winter. I remember going spear fishing with him at the river. He was always a big tease to us. My prayers are with you all.
Connie and Rich

Connie Hohnstein - January 03, 2018 at 10:54 PM