



It is with a heavy heart and deep sadness that the family of Donald E. Kleppe announce his passing. Surrounded by loved ones, he peacefully and beautifully entered the loving arms of the Father on November 28, 2023, at the age of 76. A beloved father, grandfather, brother, uncle, and loyal friend are a few titles he proudly claimed during his life here on earth.

Donald was born on September 6, 1947, in Bismarck, ND. He was the son of Russell and Jean (McAllister) Kleppe. He grew up on the KR Ranch south of Dawson, ND. He graduated from Napoleon High School in 1965 and went on to attend NDSU, where he studied business and was a collegiate track and cross-country

runner. On November 5, 1967, he married Mercedes Moch of Kintyre in Jamestown, ND. Upon their marriage, they returned to the Napoleon area where he ranched and owned a business. They were blessed with five beautiful children: Kim, Tammy, Russell, Korisa, and Dawn. During his time in Napoleon, he was the administrator of the Napoleon Care Center. He later moved to Steele, where he managed the AmVets Club. He loved the warm community, and this became his home for over 20 years. He was blessed with amazing friendships that he deeply cherished. He enjoyed visiting with people and especially loved discussing politics, current events, playing cards, and sports. He was a proud American, strong in his convictions and beliefs. He had fortitude and grit that never wavered. He was intelligent, charismatic, opinionated, incredibly brave, and had a great sense of humor. He wasn't afraid to speak his truth. To those who knew him well, he was kind, loving, supportive, and very generous. He had a soft heart, he listened, took the time and paid attention. Most importantly, he loved his children fiercely and it brought him great joy in spending time with them. He made an impact on all who knew him. He carried on the legacy of his father, by always remembering birthdays, holidays, and anniversaries. You could always count on a phone call from him to brighten your day. He savored those special moments and days, and he cherished all the memories made with his family.

He was a lifetime member of the John Birch Society. His passion for "less government and more individual responsibility and with God's help a better world," was etched in his core at an early age. At times, he was troubled by the world and its modern ways. He yearned for connection and had an innate ability to hold compassion and space for others, especially those that struggled. This was due to his own imperfections. Through his hardships came forth humility, deep strength, unwavering faith, and resilience. He was admired by many for being exactly who he was.

In his later years, he took great pride in his eight precious grandchildren. One of his favorite hobbies was watching them play all their sports and activities. He especially loved spending summer days at the ball diamond watching his grandson play baseball. His grandchildren were his light, and he was incredibly proud of each one of them. He radiated joy watching them grow and loved being their Grandpa.

He enjoyed watching NDSU Bison football. As a sports enthusiast, he closely followed high school and college sports. You could always count on him for a recap on wins, losses, and stats. He loved the MN Twins and was loyal to the MN Vikings, even though they disappointed him often. One of his highlights was taking his oldest son Kim to the Super Bowl in 2017. Don enjoyed reading books of many genres. He had a curiosity to always learn and educate himself on various topics. He loved summer trips to the Badlands and Medora. He was incredibly proud of his humble roots and being a North Dakotan.

In 2021, he moved to Mandan, ND, where he lived in Liberty Heights.

Donald is survived by his five children, Kim Kleppe, Apple Valley, MN; Tammy (Jason) Ross, Mandan, ND; Russell (Stacy) Kleppe, Napoleon, ND; Korisa (Steven) Van Ert, Chesapeake Beach, MD; and Dawn Kleppe, Los Angeles, CA; eight grandchildren, William (Veronica) Kleppe, Ethan, Tanecia, and Kaydra Kleppe, Bella, Alexander, and Charlotte Van Ert, and Evan Ross. Donald is also survived by his siblings, Richard Kleppe, Orange, CA; Rod (Lee) Kleppe, Napoleon, ND; Margie (Larry) Stute, Bismarck, ND; Norman (Celeste) Kleppe, Napoleon, ND; former wife, Mercedes Kleppe, along with many nieces and nephews.

Donald is now reunited with his parents, Russell & Jean Kleppe; his brother, Pat Kleppe; grandparents, niece, Markell Kleppe; and numerous aunts, uncles, and cousins. He will be tremendously missed and fondly remembered.

Memorials can be given to Tell Cemetery, P.O. Box 35, Napoleon, North Dakota, 58561.





## LETTING GO

*The angels gathered near your bed  
So very close to you  
For they knew the pain and suffering  
That you were going through*

*I thought about so many things  
As I held tightly to your hand  
Oh, how I wished that you were strong  
And happy once again*

*But your eyes were looking homeward  
To the place beyond the sky  
Where Jesus held His outstretched arms  
It was time to say "goodbye"*

*I struggled with my selfish thoughts  
For I wanted you to stay  
So we could walk and talk again  
Like we did – just yesterday*

*But Jesus knew the answer  
And I knew He loved you so  
So I gave to you life's greatest gift  
The gift of letting go*

*Now my heart will carry memories  
Of the love you gave to me  
Until we meet again in Heaven  
Where the best is yet to be*



IN LOVING MEMORY OF

*Donald E. Kleppe*

SEPTEMBER 6, 1947

NOVEMBER 28, 2023