



Celebrating THE *Life* OF

Harley E. Hanke

JANUARY 10, 1921 – SEPTEMBER 9, 2023

Services At:

Federated Church - Morris, Minnesota
Sunday - September 17, 2023 - 2:00 p.m.

Officiating Clergy:

Reverend Matt Orendorff
Dan Swenson, Nephew-in-Law

Pianist:

Angela Nybakke

Reader:

Nathan Libbon

Eulogists:

Drew Libbon, Katherine Libbon, and Sarah Libbon

Special Music:

Nathan Libbon and Katherine Libbon

Pallbearers:

Lee Johnston, Ben Spahl, Jim Grant
Galen Grant, Jim Clune, Mike Haydon

Military Honors:

Morris American Legion, AmVets & VFW
Minnesota Army Honor Guard

Committal Service:

Monday, September 18, 2023 - 10:30 a.m.
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church - Brownsville, Minnesota

For God so *loved*
that He *Gave* the world,
Gave His only
begotten Son,
that whosoever believeth in Him
should not perish but have
Everlasting
- John 3:16 *life.*

Harley was born on January 10, 1921, in Brownsville, Minn. in the same house where his father was born and on the land his grandfather originally homesteaded – a place still owned by his family and lovingly referred to as “Harley Heaven.” Harley attended high school in Caledonia, Minn., and graduated in 1938. His parents instilled in him the value of education and a hard work ethic at an early age, which propelled his life’s journey and professional career.

For one year, he stayed home and helped on the farm to save money to go on to college. He enrolled in the St. Paul School of Agriculture in 1939, but later took a job as a 4-H Agent in Stearns County to earn more money to continue his education. He enrolled again at the University of Minnesota in the fall of 1941 after winning a scholarship from a national livestock judging competition in Chicago. Short on money again in 1942, he paused his education to work as a fieldman at a creamery in Rush City. This was during the start of World War II and the job was deferred, meaning he was not eligible for the draft. However, feeling it was his duty to serve his country and join his comrades in the battle for freedom, he resigned from his job, intentionally making himself eligible for the WWII draft. He served three years in the army, 14 months of which were in Italy as a combat infantry squad leader, fighting the Germans through the Apennine Mountains and across the Po Valley. He was awarded the Bronze Star for heroic achievement in action.

When the war was over, he returned to the University of Minnesota and then got a job teaching Veterans on the Farm Training at Murdock. It was there that he met the love of his life, Helen Krattenmaker. The two later wed in 1969 and had one daughter, Sarah, in 1970.

Never one to leave a goal unattained, Harley returned to the University of Minnesota and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1953. He then taught at the West Central School of Agriculture in Morris for two years and went on to earn his master’s degree in Animal Husbandry. He was appointed assistant professor at the University of Minnesota West Central Experiment Station in charge of teaching and research with dairy cattle, beef cattle, swine and sheep. He held this position for 33 years, authoring or co-authoring 57 articles or abstracts published in the Journal of Animal Science, 95 articles in the Minnesota Sheep and Lamb Feeders Proceedings, 59 articles in the University Swine Reports, 45 Beef Feeder proceedings, 6 Beef-Cow-Calf publications, and 2 articles in the Journal of Animal Production as well as numerous University bulletins. His accomplishments led to him being promoted to full professor in 1980 and being inducted into the Minnesota Livestock Hall of Fame in 1987. Harley was a proud member of the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity at the University of Minnesota and was named 2001 AGR Man of the Year. In 2000, the West Central Research and Outreach Center (formerly West Central Experiment Station) dedicated and renamed their sheep research facility the Harley Hanke & Robert Jordan Sheep Research Facility.

Harley was an avid conservationist who loved to hunt, fish and enjoy the beauty of nature. He was a member of the American Society of Animal Science, a director of the Minnesota Shorthorn Breeders Association for 18 years, a director of the Dakota-Minnesota Columbia Sheep Breeders Association for 20 years, a member of the Kiwanis Club and advisor to Key Club, member of the VFW, American Legion, Morris Sportsmen’s Club and past president of the Morris Federated Church.

To list Harley’s awards and achievements would quite literally take a whole book, but even more remarkable and important than his accomplishments, was his faith in God, love for his family and friends, and unwavering commitment to always treat people the way he would want to be treated and to always do the ‘right and honorable thing.’ Harley was truly the greatest of the Greatest Generation and an uncommon man who left a legacy that will not soon be forgotten. His family will be inspired by his example all their earthly days and will strive to follow in his footsteps until they are reunited again in Heaven, having, like Harley, placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

Harley E. Hanke of Morris, Minn., passed peacefully into the arms of his Savior on Saturday, September 9, 2023, in the presence of his loving family having achieved the remarkable age of 102 and the definition of a life well lived.

Harley is survived by his wife, Helen Hanke, daughter, Sarah (Nathan) Libbon; grandson Andrew Libbon, granddaughter Katherine Libbon, sister Violet Hoglund of St. Paul, MN, sister Ruby Philpot of Portland, OR, sister Donna Lutchens of New Albin, IA, many beloved nieces and nephews, and countless former students, colleagues and friends.



Guestbook QR Code



Tribute Video QR Code

Pedersen 
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