



CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF

Harold L. Claassen

FEBRUARY 17, 1942 – FEBRUARY 26, 2023

If these walls could talk,
They would speak of a man
Who has worked with *great heart*
To accomplish his plan.

They'd speak of the times
That he's prayed in the night
For the strength to go on

And to **DO WHAT IS RIGHT**

They'd speak of sweet moments,
Of laughter and fun,
The times with his children,
His *love* for each one.

Oh, if they could talk,
It would be just the start
Of a story of love,

A GREAT MAN & HIS HEART

Services At:

Our Savior's Lutheran Church — Chokio, Minnesota
Friday — March 3, 2023 — 10:30 a.m.

Officiating Clergy:
Reverend Erik Rundquist

Musician:
Julene Amborn

Soloist:
Greg Sperr

Pallbearers:
Brandon Claassen, Zachary Claassen
Greg Estenson, Neil Suess, Nathan Suess
Kenny McNally, Joe McNally, Paul Swenson

Honorary Pallbearers:
Monroe Estenson, Peggy Suess
All Those Who Called Harold A Friend

Interment:
Frog Lake Cemetery
Rural Alberta, Minneosta

Harold Leroy Claassen was born on February 17, 1942 to Meta (Umland) and William Claassen in Hewitt, Minnesota. After moving to Chokio, Harold was confirmed at Our Savior's Lutheran Church and attended public school until graduating with his class in 1960.

Soon after graduation Harold met Karen Armstrong at a dance in Donnelly. The two married December 18, 1965 and welcomed two sons: Bruce and Brad. During his life Harold enjoyed working for several local farmers and for a time at the Donnelly creamery before it was closed. As a natural fixer, he spent the majority of his career as a mechanic at Tri-County Co-op before later moving over to Donnelly Co-op, where he would retire. Sometimes to his family's dismay, Harold would drop everything to go fix broken machinery regardless if it was for work or just a friend in need. He had a big heart and would never leave someone stranded if he had the means to help them.

Harold loved talking about hunting, fishing, and the past. He loved reminiscing and could turn a five-minute conversation into an hour-long visit. He got great joy out of telling his latest jokes and taking a cruise around the country to take in the wildlife.

After retirement, Harold and Karen liked spending time volunteering together, both as "adoptive grandparents" at the school in Chokio, and as helpers at the senior center – Karen brought the baked treats and Harold played cards.

While Harold had a knack for appreciating something in everyone, his favorite people were his grandsons Brandon and Zachary. He loved spending time with his boys, especially when it involved hunting and fishing. And even more so when a teachable moment presented itself, like the times he was able to demonstrate the value of yellow stren fishing line on a \$35 rod versus something fancy that was considerably more money.

Up until the very end of his life Harold loved spending time with his family, friends, and especially his wife Karen. On Saturday, February 18, 2023 Harold had a minor fall while walking on ice. Not noticing the seriousness of his injuries, he was not hospitalized until Saturday, February 25. He was taken to Stevens Community Medical Center in Morris and quickly transported to the hospital in St. Cloud where he passed away on February 26, 2023; he was 81 years old.

Left to cherish Harold's memory are his wife, Karen Claassen of Chokio; son, Brad (Stacy) Claassen of Maple Grove; grandsons: Brandon Claassen of Monticello, Zachary Claassen of St. Peter; brothers: Bill (Lois) Claassen, Leroy (Dody) Claassen, Elmer (Geanne) Claassen, Jim (Liane) Claassen; sisters: Helen McNally and Lorraine Smith; brothers-in-law: Vernon (Shirley) Armstrong, John (Phyllis) Armstrong, Jim (Sue) Armstrong; sister-in-law, Cheryl (Monroe) Estenson; special niece, Peggy (Ray) Suess; as well as many other beloved nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. Harold is preceded in death by his son, Bruce Claassen; his parents, William and Meta Claassen; father and mother-in-law, Wesley and Marjorie Armstrong; siblings: John (Twila) Claassen, Kenny Claassen, Diane Claassen, Betty (Louie) Voytoski; brothers-in-law: Donald Smith and Bob McNally.

