



Michael Kevin Falkingham was born in Browns Valley, Minnesota, on April 13, 1950. That first day, Mike began to develop his life-long talent for making friends, as he shared the delivery room with another baby boy, Thomas Agar. Among their first visitors was Mike's Grandma Hilda. She climbed three-foot snowbanks to peer thru a window of the local hospital—a big, white, wooden building that later became part of Ike's Chicken Shack.

Mike was baptized and confirmed at Zion Lutheran Church in Browns Valley, the same place he married Eleanor Nettetstad on April 28, 1973. They had dated in high school, where Mike played football and wrestled for the Thunderbirds, while Eleanor was a cute cheerleader and played in the band.

A 1968 graduate of Browns Valley High School, Mike attended Moorhead State University before returning to his home town to help his father. Mike's grandfather, Ben Falkingham, purchased a blacksmith shop in Browns Valley a few years after World War One. He added gas pumps and called the place Ben's Super Service.

Ben soon retired to a life of fishing and farming, and his son, Wayne ran the D-X station for many years. When Wayne was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease, Mike not only helped care for his father; he also took over the family business.

With the help of Eleanor, their three kids, and his mother, Marion, Mike turned Ben's Service and Bait into the first place folks stop when they pull into town and the last place they visit on the way out. Whether you needed gas, ice, bait, fishing tips and gear, directions, or just a good laugh, Mike was the guy who could—and *would*—help you with ANYTHING! Young or old, local or stranger. Before you left Ben's, you knew you'd found a good friend in Mike.

In his younger days, Mike had a lot of interests—besides Eleanor. He played in the Becker Township Parlor Band. He rode his snowmobile on poker runs. He served as captain of Butch's Buzzards softball team for eight seasons. He and his pals bowled on a team sponsored by Goodhart Brothers Blacksmith Shop. He also played golf.

If you ever golfed with Mike, you know it took an accountant to track all of his 'Bingo-Bango-Bongo' side bets. As both his family and his business grew, Mike abandoned many of those youthful follies. He focused instead on activities he could share with his wife and children. Primary among those activities were fishing and hunting. Mike loved lakes and rivers. He loved the hills and valleys that surround them. He loved the birds, fish and game that live in them. He passed this love on—not only to his family, but to everyone that crossed his path.

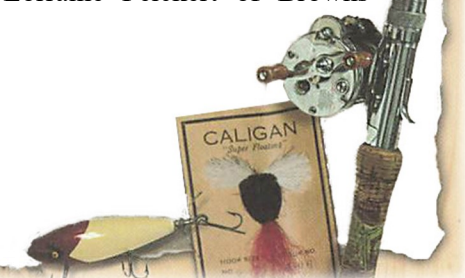
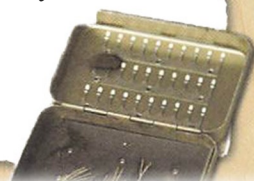
For some of us, our hobbies *interfere* with our jobs. Or vice versa. Not for Mike. His hobbies *enhanced* his work. Hearing him talk about his latest hunting or fishing trip, or his kids' and grandkids' ballgames or career ventures, were a bigger drawing card than the gas or ice you needed. His stories are what kept you coming back. His *friendship* is what carried Ben's Service and Bait from its third generation into what is now a *fifth-generation* family business.

The moment you met Mike, you knew you had a friend for life. Only one thing could end that friendship: CANCER. Mike was diagnosed with multiple myeloma in March of 2017, almost six years ago. As his dad had done with ALS, Mike fought cancer with everything he had—and then some.

Time after time, he beat the odds. He kept fighting right to the end. Somehow, his spirit never waned. With the support of his wife, his family, and his vast community of friends, he never gave up. His body simply couldn't take it anymore.

Mike was preceded in death by his parents: Wayne and Marion Falkingham; In-laws: Orin and Bernice Nettetstad; and two nephews: Erik Falkingham and Kary Nettetstad.

Mike is survived by his wife of 49 years, Eleanor, of Browns Valley; children: Carmen (Matt Goodhart) Hills of Browns Valley; Austin (Leah) Falkingham of Tea, SD; Karen (Jeremiah) Larsen of Volga, SD; son-in-law, David (Julie Birchem) Hills of Beardsley, MN; grandchildren: Ellie (Sean Whalen) Hills, Isaac (Anna Sells) Hills; Gunner, Ava, and Gage Falkingham; and Audrey and Oliver Larsen; brother, Jeff (Bonnie) Falkingham of Eden Prairie, MN; sister, Patty (Don) Fall of Crookston, MN; brother-in-law, Ed (Bridget Robb) Nettetstad of Fort Myers, FL; nieces and nephews: Amy (Will) Barnett, Ben (Erin) Fall, Anne (Randy) Prudhomme, Kyle (Theresa Colagrossi) Nettetstad, and Cindy Perkins; aunt, Lorraine Peickert of Browns Valley; and several cousins.



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Michael Kevin Falkingham

FUNERAL SERVICE
Saturday, January 28, 2023 - 11:00 a.m.
St. Anthony's Catholic Church
Browns Valley, Minnesota

OFFICIANTS
Pastor Pat Schubert
Father John Paul Knopik

MUSICIANS
Carmen Hills, Pianist
Jill Spindler and Jan LeClair, Vocalists

URN BEARERS
Grandchildren:
Ellie Hills | Isaac Hills | Gunner Falkingham | Ava Falkingham
Gage Falkingham | Audrey Larsen | Oliver Larsen

HONORARY BEARERS
All of Mike's Many Friends

GREETERS
Keith and Cindy Haggerty

INURNMENT
At a Later Date
Valley View Cemetery - Browns Valley, Minnesota

APPRECIATION
Mike's family is grateful for your attendance at this service.
Your many expressions of kindness and love are deeply appreciated. Following the funeral service, please join the family for food and fellowship in the church dining room.

After Glow

*I'd like the memory of me to be a happy one.
I'd like to leave an afterglow of smiles when life is done.*

*I'd like to leave an echo whispering softly down the ways,
Of happy times and laughing times and bright and sunny days.*

*I'd like the tears of those who grieve, to dry before the sun
Of happy memories that I leave when my life is done.*

www.mundwilerfuneralhome.net

Remembering
THE LIFE OF



Mike Falkingham

April 13, 1950 - January 20, 2023

