

Celebrating THE *Life* OF

Ralph T. Hendrickson

JUNE 2, 1931 – OCTOBER 21, 2024

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:

West Zion Lutheran Church
Hancock, Minnesota
Saturday, October 26, 2024
11:00 a.m.

Officiating Clergy:

Pastor Steve Carmany

Musician:

Ben Jeitz

Music Selections:

"In The Garden"
"My God And I"
"The Lord's Prayer"

Pallbearers:

Jeff Erickson, Ross Greenwaldt
Jackson Hendrickson, John Hendrickson
Mark Hendrickson, Mike Hendrickson

Interment:

West Zion Cemetery
Hancock, Minnesota

Ralph Thomas Hendrickson, 93, of rural Hancock, Minnesota passed away Monday, October 21, 2024 at his home.

Ralph Thomas Hendrickson was born June 2, 1931, to Ida (Berg) and Tilford Hendrickson. Ralph grew up during the Great Depression and, like many of his generation, this shaped his work ethic and values for the rest of his life. He lived with his parents, two siblings, and two uncles in their tiny two-story Hoff Township house with no running water or electricity until he was in his teens. During winters, it was commonplace to wake up in a second-floor bedroom with snow around the windows and on the beds because the main-floor fuel burning stove couldn't keep up. His family raised beef, pigs, chickens, and various other animals and grew most of their own produce. When he took over from Tilford, Ralph became the third generation of Hendricksons to farm the land first homesteaded in 1880 by Andrew and Anne (Aslakson) Hendrickson. Ralph dedicated his life to caring for his land and his beef cattle. He was reliable as the sun in feeding and watering his beloved herd every morning and every evening. He would spend hours during calving season watching the pasture for any sign that a cow or calf was in distress. Because of his attention and care of his animals, his beef was prized by family, friends, and the sale barn auctioneers who would frequently comment on the quality of his cattle. He was proud to be able to still do cattle chores well into his 90s.

Not many things could get Ralph to leave the farm. Fortunately, he did one evening when he agreed to a blind date roller skating at the Pavilion in Glenwood. There he met Irma Roeber, a nurse in Morris, who turned out to be the love of his life. The couple was married by Pastor Knute Palmer at West Zion on March 28, 1953, and were inseparable for 70 years before Irma passed away in April 2023. Ralph and Irma were blessed with three children—son Robert and daughters Barbara and Brenda. Ralph was a very hands-on father for his day because Irma often worked evening and overnight shifts. His care and attention to his family never wavered and he was always there for his kids and later his grandkids.

Ralph was a lifelong member of West Zion, the church his grandfather helped establish, and served at various times as church secretary, deacon, trustee, and usher.

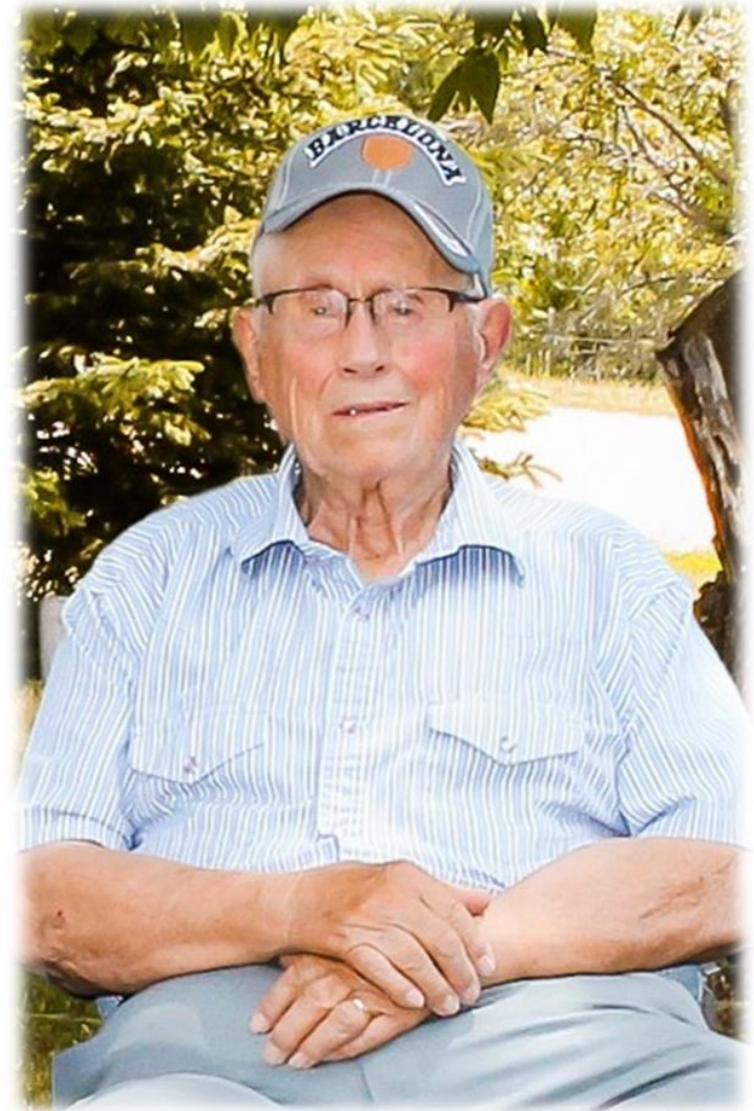
Ralph's one indulgence off the farm was baseball. He played amateur baseball when he was in his teens and 20s—he is said to have swung quite a bat and was speedy on the basepaths. Robert and grandson Jackson followed in his footsteps and he loved seeing them play. He also loved the Minnesota Twins and it was the dream of a lifetime to be in the stands at Game 7 of the 1987 World Series when the Twins won their first ever World Series! He also felt fortunate to twice be able to go to Twins Spring Training in Fort Myers.

Ralph loved a prank and probably everyone who knew him was a victim at least once. He was also one of those people with an uncanny memory for dates and events—you could name an event from years ago and he could tell you the weather and where he was and what he was doing when it happened.

He'll be remembered for his self-deprecating humor and smiling blue eyes and as a gentle spirit who was easy to talk to and had a genuine interest in others. Ralph passed away peacefully with family at his side on October 21, 2024. As he wished, he died at his beloved home in Hoff Township where he lived for most of his 93 years. He is survived by son Robert (Beth) Hendrickson of Hancock; daughters Barb (Jeff) Erickson of Benson and Brenda (Ross) Greenwaldt of Sauk Centre; grandchildren Kristen (Adam) Levitt, Kelly Hendrickson Starkey (Zack Starkey), Jillian Hendrickson, Jackson Hendrickson (Mariah Zellmer), Hillary (Jay) Andrews, Holly Erickson (Jaiden Forbord), Maren Greenwaldt, and Madison Greenwaldt; great-grandchildren Ian, Adalyn, Emilia, and Isabel Levitt, Emmett Berens, Joven Forbord, and Wells Andrews; sisters-in-law Dolora Hendrickson of Morris, MN, Joanne Roeber of Rochester, MN, and Renata Riley of Salem, OR; and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. Ralph was preceded in death by his wife of 70 years, Irma (Roeber) Hendrickson, parents Ida and Tilford Hendrickson, brother Alan Hendrickson, sister Mary Hendrickson, parents-in-law William and Frieda Roeber, sister- and brother-in-law Hildegard and Virgil Hanson, and brothers-in-law Ernest Roeber and Richard Riley.

The family would like to thank the staff at Glacial Ridge Hospice—especially Shelly, Amber, and Billy—for their care and loving attention to Ralph.

I N L O V I N G *Memory*



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