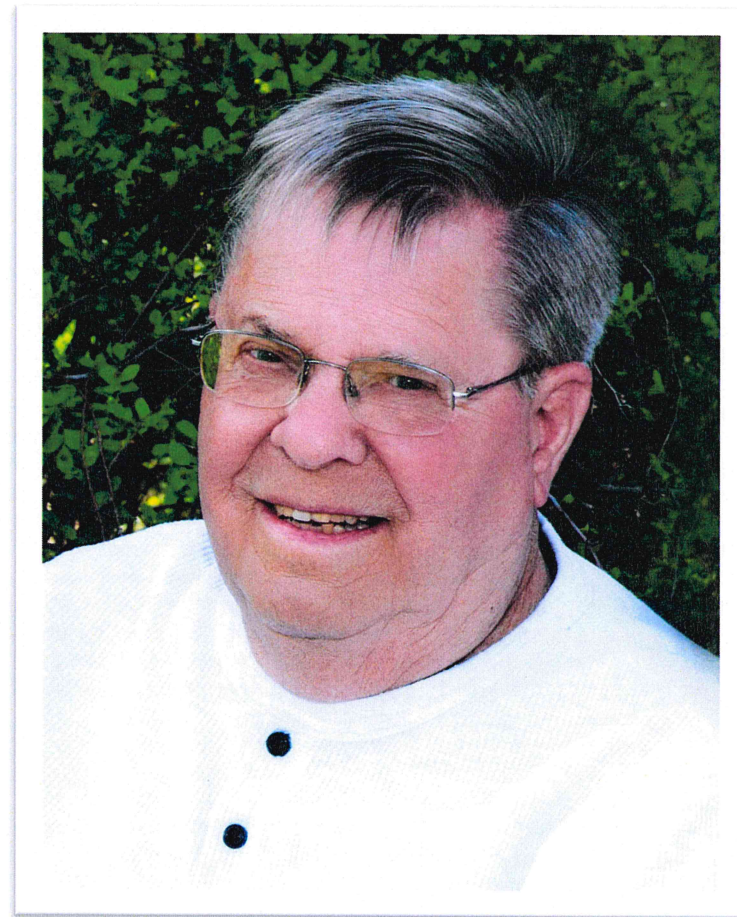




Celebrating The Life Of  
**Roger Hilton Sonichsen**

23<sup>rd</sup>  
*Psalm*

THE LORD IS MY *Shepherd*: I SHALL NOT WANT.  
HE MAKETH ME TO LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES:  
*He leadeth me* BESIDE THE STILL WATERS.  
HE RESTORETH MY SOUL: HE LEADETH ME IN THE  
PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS  
*for His names sake.*  
YEA, THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE  
SHADOW OF DEATH, *I will fear no evil*:  
FOR THOU ART WITH ME: THY ROD AND  
THY STAFF *they comfort me.*  
THOU PREPAREST A TABLE BEFORE ME IN THE  
PRESENCE OF MINE ENEMIES:  
THOU ANOINTEST MY HEAD WITH OIL:  
*my cup runneth over.*  
SURELY GOODNESS AND MERCY SHALL FOLLOW  
ME ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE: AND I WILL  
DWELL IN THE *house of the Lord forever.*



June 5, 1940  
August 30, 2023



Born June 5, 1940, Roger was raised in Ireton, IA with his loving mother of a successful Hair Salon, Lila's Beauty Shop. Given the nature of the business, He also had a great community to help look over him as he grew. Roger became interested in farming with his Aunt and Uncle on a farm in Union County, SD west of Hawarden, IA. He started to operate farm equipment at the age of 8 years old and never looked back. Roger graduated Ireton High School in 1959 and married his High School sweetheart, Caren Carter. In 1960, the two got married as teenagers and maintained that marriage for 63 years! On that journey, they had 3 children and from that grew the family tree! Roger was a gracious and loving husband and father. Roger was baptized and confirmed in Ireton Methodist Church. Later, he was baptized and became a member of Big Springs Baptist church where he remained.

Roger was a thinker and was always engineering ways to improve his farming techniques and abilities. He had awards dedicated to his conservation farming practices in the 60's. Roger always stated, "you need to listen to the farm, it will tell you what to do"! He employed many innovative techniques and never shied away from a challenge. His passion was the soil, grease, diesel and iron! He had a steadfast passion for his craft and loved the tractors and machinery that he used to make his way. On his life's journey, he farmed, did custom work, operated his own truck and created a lucrative hay trucking business, custom combining, dirt construction and ice removal for SD highways and much more.

Roger and Caren bought the farm from the Swansons, and it became their life's work. With the unfortunate news in 2008 of an ALS diagnosis, Roger, through faith, grit and determination, confronted that disease and survived it for over 15 years! Along the way, everything he loved to do never stopped completely. On his farm you will find many lifts and hoists on different machines that allow him to continue operating equipment well past his ability to walk. There were handicap controls on tractors and heavy construction equipment. If he needed to operate something with his feet, he just put levers and bars on them and never stopped going. He continued custom combining, building terraces and multiple other personal farm projects. And he really started to like old John Deeres because they had a hand clutch! He was a tractor enthusiast and loved different brands although his hearts passion is Oliver tractors and farm equipment. He loved steam powered equipment and even bought a steam tractor in 2022 that made its mark in Madison, SD for Prairie Village and surrounded himself with a support crew to get it done. He also enjoyed antique cars and motorcycles and when he could not ride anymore, he got a HD Trike and, with some conversions, rode that for over 10 years. Roger was thrilled to enjoy the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sturgis when he turned 75 years old.

Although much of his life was on the farm, Roger and Caren had many friends in the community and beyond. Roger always cared for people and would go out of his way to strike a conversation with a friend or perfect stranger, it didn't matter. In the winters, they journeyed south to AZ and CA and routes in between for over 20 years to visit friends and family. Among his passions was music, but his greatest passions were People, Coffee and Conversation. Anyone who knew Roger knew that if he got your ear, you would be in for a long talk. There are jokes about that! He passed away on Wednesday, August 30, 2023 at his home under hospice care, surrounded by his family.

Roger is survived by his loving wife of 63 years, Caren Carter-Sonichsen; his children, Troy (Jan) Sonichsen of Sioux City, Tara Sonichsen of Hawarden, and Teresa Bell of Tea, SD; five grandchildren, Jessica (Brent) West, Karen (Chris) Lundquist and Eric (Lynette) Johnson, Noah Bell, and Abi Bell; five great-grandsons, Gage, Tavian, Liam, Xander, and Wyatt along with bonus grand and great-grandchildren; several nieces and cousins.

Roger was preceded in death by his Mother Lila; half-sister, Nathalie Schiefen; and a special grandson, Tayce Sonichsen. May his memory be eternal.

## *In Loving Memory Of Roger Hilton Sonichsen*

### **FUNERAL SERVICE**

2:00 p.m. Thursday, September 7, 2023  
Big Springs Baptist Church  
rural Alcester, South Dakota

### **OFFICIATING**

Pastor Dave Moore

### **PIANIST**

Linda Johnson

### **SPECIAL MUSIC**

Mennonite Choir

*"Just A Closer Walk With Thee"*

*"Precious Memories"*

### **CONGREGATIONAL HYMNS**

*"How Great Thou Art"*

*"Because He Lives"*

### **HONORARY CASKET BEARERS**

John Vander Feen ~ Eugene Swanson

Larry Nilson ~ Dennis Moller

Blake Larson ~ Don Frier

### **CASKET BEARERS**

Mike Maag ~ Mark Pressley

Jim Blomberg ~ Dave Hanson

Mike Peters ~ Neal Barnes

### **INTERMENT**

Big Springs Cemetery  
rural Alcester, South Dakota

*Please join Roger's family for refreshments and fellowship  
in the church basement following the committal service.*