



Darrell Hoover

February 27, 1928 - June 10, 2013

Glendive, Montana: Darrell Hoover, age 85, passed away on Tuesday, June 4, 2013 at the Glendive Medical Center Extended Care in Glendive. A Life Tribute Service will be held at 10:00 A.M. on Monday, June 10, 2013 in the Chapel of the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home in Glendive with Celebrant Sandy Silha officiating. Interment with military honors will be held in the Dawson County Cemetery in Glendive. Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home of Glendive has been entrusted with the arrangements. Darrell was born on February 27, 1928 in Waterville, New York, a son of Vernon Clark and Margaret (Olgaard) Hoover. Three years later, Vernon and Margaret separated and Darrell and his mother moved to the Olgaard Farm near Cooperstown, North Dakota. In 1935, Darrell went to live with his Aunt Clara and Uncle Elwin Neer in Mott, North Dakota. In 1942, Darrell went to live with another Aunt Olga Olgaard Helland on her dude ranch in Glendive where he attended Dawson County High School. Following high school, Darrell continued his education at the Dawson Community College in Glendive for two years before moving to Missoula, Montana where he attended the University of Montana for two years and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Geology in 1951. Darrell enlisted in the Montana National Guard in 1948 initially for a period of three years. Twenty-seven years later, still in the Guard, he transferred into the Army Reserve for an additional nine years. During his career in the National Guard he had many assignments including Troop Commander, Squadron (executive officer), Regimental S-2 (intelligence),

provost Marshall, and Regimental XO with the grade of Lt. Col. He was promoted to full Colonel in the United States Army Reserve and retired in 1984. During his tour of duty in the National Guard he became interested in marksmanship competition, first with rifle and then with the pistol. In 1952, he fired in the National Rifle matches at Fort Benning, Georgia. During the period of 1956 through 1967 he attended the National Pistol Matches eight times at Camp Perry, Ohio, both as a shooter and team captain. In 1957 he won the unclassified reserve category, over two hundred fifty competitors at Camp Perry. He shot in the master class and in 1968 won the Distinguished Pistol Shot Badge. He was an NRA Certified instructor in rifle and pistol and was currently coaching the Trail's End Club in Glendive. Darrell met and later married Ardana Kathryn Currens on July 22, 1961 and to this union two daughters were born, Julie in 1962 and Lori in 1963. As a couple they settled one mile east of Glendive on Bell Prairie Road. Darrell was employed for thirty-two years with the Montana Highway Department and retired in 1990. He enjoyed wood working and occasionally playing the piano. In Darrell's younger years, he enjoyed chasing wild horses on horseback through what is now "Makoshika Park". He was very fluent in playing the piano, clarinet and saxophone. He was in a band that played at several dances held at Sam's Arcade in Glendive and surrounding communities. He loved Dixieland and classical music. He was preceded in death by his parents, Vernon and Margaret Hoover and his wife, Ardana in 1980. Survivors include his daughters, Julie (Bob) Loewen of Glasgow, Montana and Lori (Ed) Hilbert of Glendive, five grandchildren, Ashley Hoover (Mike Nemitz), Trisha Loewen, Kyle Loewen, Sara Hilbert and Adam Hilbert and one greatgranddaughter, Klaire Nemitz. Remembrances and condolences may be shared with the family at: www.silvernale-silhafuneralhome.com. Eulogy: Darrell Hoover... what a guy! His daughters, Julie and Lori, sometimes shake their heads over their dad; the things he could come up with would make them wince a bit, but you learned to just shrug and smile because well, that was Darrell. A talented, intelligent man with a dry sense of humor and an honest nature, he was

certainly a strong personality in the lives of those around him. A good friend of Darrell's described Darrell as being "a one way man and usually right!" Everyone liked and respected Darrell. A bit gruff, he could laugh at himself; he lived by a good set of values; he had strong opinions, he often was not politically correct; but more often than not, he was right. Darrell was very social, and a short greeting often led to a long conversation with much storytelling. And when he told a story he would often say "and that's the truth as I know it." When asked how he was, Darrell loved to reply, "meaner than a junkyard dog." You would have to go a long ways to find someone more compassionate or generous in nature than Darrell. You probably noticed in his obituary that Darrell moved around a bit during his youth. When he was enrolled in Dawson Community College here in Glendive, he had a writing assignment for his English class, and Darrell chose to write about life when he was 13 years old, and living with his Aunt Clara and Uncle Elwin in Mott, North Dakota. Darrell's autobiography began with these words: "It is odd how one circumstance can change the course of a person's life, but that is exactly what happened to me. It was a warm evening in October of 1941 that my aunt Clara was struck by a speeding automobile." Darrell tells about how at the time of the accident he was picking up newspapers at the train station for a route he had. He said, "When I arrived at the depot I heard that someone had been hurt in an auto accident but nobody seemed to know who it was. When the train came in, I grabbed my papers, jumped on my bicycle, and rode furiously down the road trying to best my competitors to the hotel where we sold the most papers. As I drew up in front of the hotel, I noticed a large crowd of people surrounding the ambulance. I went over to see what had happened. I was stunned to find it was my aunt who had been in the accident." Darrell went on to describe the accident and Clara's subsequent death. The funeral was going to be in eastern North Dakota and as the family traveled to the funeral, a coal truck crossed the road in front of them and as they skidded towards what Darrell was sure was his own death, his short life flashed before

his eyes. Included in this flash of childhood memories of misadventures, Darrell tells of wanting to cut wood and when he had the opportunity, he swung the axe once, hit himself in the head, and thus ended any desire to swing an axe. Darrell goes on to tell of starting a club with the neighborhood boys. They built a watchtower on the roof of the garage using a cardboard box, complete with electrical wire and a light. On a hot day in July, they managed to start the roof on fire. The local fire department saved the garage with minimal damage. Other childhood memories for Darrell included when he first started piano lessons and how hard it was for him to put in his practice time, and how when he was nine he became seriously ill with pneumonia and was hospitalized for eleven days, an illness that reoccurred when he was in the eighth grade. These are a few of the things that flashed through Darrell's mind as the car skidded to a stop. A collision was avoided, and the rest of the trip was uneventful. After his aunt's death, things weren't the same on the farm. World War II began in 1941 and as an eighth grader, Darrell termed the world "bleak." In the summer of 1942, Darrell and his mother sold all their household goods with the idea of moving to Seattle, Washington. Darrell says "on the way, we stopped in Glendive to visit my aunt Olga. I had always liked Glendive, or at least my aunt's ranch." After they left his aunt's dude ranch, Darrell pretty much made up his mind he would not like Seattle. He termed the trip "tiresome" and once they arrived Darrell only stayed a week before he headed back to Glendive, surprising his aunt. But she let him stay and Darrell started high school in the fall. During high school, Darrell worked at his aunt's ranch in the summers. He enjoyed taking care of the horses, but he found out the hard way that they weren't all gentle. His skills with the horses grew and he soon felt he was good enough to break horses. He would chase wild horses where Makoshika is now, rounding up the horses to break and use on the ranch. During high school, Darrell again took up his piano lessons and also was in band. He became very proficient on the clarinet and saxophone, as well as the piano. He also performed in a play about which he said this: "I was chosen to play a minor part because the script called for a male piano

player and there was no one else that could play. I never enjoyed the play so much as when it was all over.” Throughout life, Darrell enjoyed playing his music, but never enjoyed playing solo in front of people. Once, Darrell scooted Julie and granddaughter Trisha out of the house so he could listen to a favorite musical radio show. They returned a bit early and could hear Darrell playing Trisha’s saxophone along with the radio, something he would never do in front of them. Darrell’s family claims also, that given a choice, Darrell would rather have been a cowboy than a musician. When Darrell was a junior in high school, by his telling, that was when he decided to become a geologist. He did go on to get a Bachelor’s Degree in Geology from the University of Montana. It seems that the best use he made of that was to help his grandchildren identify all the rocks they would bring to him. He was an expert in “leverites”, which that rock you want to “leave ‘r right” there. After high school, Darrell immediately joined a local dance orchestra and the money he earned paid for all his needs in going to Dawson Community College. Although the life story for his English assignment ended there, his life certainly didn’t. After graduation, Darrell enlisted in the Montana National Guard, serving a total of 36 years. Darrell loved his time in the Guard and Reserves. No matter what a conversation started out about, could be paint on the walls, it would always get around to stories about times in the Guard. It was a most important time in Darrell’s life. Darrell had many assignments and advanced to the rank of a full Colonel. He was a leader liked and respected by his men. He became interested in marksmanship competitions with rifle and pistols. He fired in many prestigious military events, winning many honors in the competitions. He was both an elite shooter and a team captain. Darrell also became a certified NRA instructor in rifle and pistol, and was a lifetime member of the NRA. A friend and fellow shooter, Kenny Olmstead, says that Darrell was a tough instructor. He taught Kenny and others to bulls-eye shoot. Of the one hundred plus techniques used in shooting and marksmanship, Darrell would be quick to point out about thirty that you had done wrong. Darrell was a perfectionist, and he expected you to perform up to his expectations. That’s

what made him so good at it. His favorite gun was a semi-automatic Colt .45 revolver. Another special talent Darrell had was as a wood craftsman. His woodworking abilities were legendary. He made a kitchen cupboard set for his daughters to play house with, which is still at the house. He made a rocking horse for a young Ashley which she named Flicka. He crafted many gifts for all his family members. Darrell fixed and refinished all the gunstocks for the guard and claimed how they sure shot better after that. After college, the money he made playing in the dance band was spent on tools. Even Darrell's friends comment on how proud of his tools he was. With guns and with tools, safety was a big issue. Darrell didn't collect guns, each gun had a purpose, but tools, he collected them. The ranch here in Glendive that Darrell came to when he was 14, became his lifelong home. In the late 50's, Darrell went to work for the Montana Highway Department as a parts man. A few years later, he married Ardana Kathryn Currens. Their first home was a boxcar with an addition out on the ranch. Later, Darrell would build the ranch house that now is on the home place. Darrell and Ardana began their family with daughter Julie, or "Pooey" as she was nicknamed, followed by Lori, or "Bits" as she was known to family. Mom was the disciplinarian in the family, but Darrell taught by example, never yelling, but firm and not to be argued with. He taught Julie to throw a softball, and Dad and his girls had a favorite frisbee game they played together. Julie and Lori knew he loved horses but he didn't seem to mind when they didn't seem very interested in them. He tried to interest them in playing music with some success. With Mom ill at a young age, vacations were combined with doctor visits to Minneapolis. The death of Ardana when the girls were in high school lent to a closer relationship forming between Darrell and his daughters. He once told Julie that their mother had pretty much raised them alone, but in truth, Darrell had a big influence on their lives and was always there when they needed him. Family was very important to Darrell. Darrell's five grandchildren became special people in his life. Granddaughter Ashley and Grandpa were very close, as Ashley and Lori lived

with Darrell for a time. As a youngster, Ashley would get ready for bed, sit in Grandpa's chair, kiss him, punch him in the tummy, and run to bed. Then Ashley was apt to return with her favorite book about snakes and have Grandpa read to her. Grandpa taught grandson Kyle when first meeting someone to always look them in the eye and give them a firm handshake. Granddaughter Trish inherited his talent and interest in music. Trish always thought Grandpa could read minds because she always got what she wanted for Christmas. She didn't realize for years that he was sending money to her mother to shop for him. Granddaughter Sara kept his fridge covered in artwork, and he kept every piece. He also had a wall of Ashley's day care art, some of which had wrinkled and he had ironed and re-hung it. His advice to Sara, which she took to heart, was to always spend someone else's money instead of your own. For grandson Adam, Grandpa saved all his junk mail, because he knew it was important for a kid to get mail to open. Any mail with money in it, like a March of Dimes letter, went into a pile by the stove for Adam. If grandkids were visiting, Darrell would ask them if they were cooking or if he was. Darrell cooking was eating out, usually the Gusthauf. The family usually let him have the pleasure of cooking. When Kyle and Trish would come from Glasgow to visit, a "butter run" would be made with them and Ashley. Darrell had a certain butter he loved that he bought in Dickinson. He and the grandkids would go to get a years supply of butter for him to throw in the freezer. They would hit Wal-Mart for school clothes, and Herbergers for one dress outfit each. Upon arriving back at the ranch, there would then be a fashion show. Darrell was very particular about his hair cuts and always wore a crew cut. All the grandkids would walk by Grandpa when he was in his chair and rub his crew cut. He would pretend to pick bugs out of it and eat them, much to their delight. Darrell would let his grandkids work for him and earn money. And they, in turn, never wanted to disappoint him. Darrell always was very supportive and respected their efforts and endeavors. Darrell's friends and co-workers say that when Darrell was with them, he always talked about his family. He was very proud of each of them. Ashley was very thankful that

Darrell was able to meet his Great-granddaughter, Clare, who he nicknamed P.J. Darrell had a large circle of friends, and they were a big part of his life. His coffee friends had a special place in his heart. They would meet almost every day, solve the problems of the world, fix many guns, and they always were “packin” cause you never knew what could happen. He loved his coffee and it had to be hot. Even in the nursing home, Lori would take him to the “mess hall” for coffee every day. Darrell’s family describe him with great love and humor as a perfectionist and a very structured man. He did not care for surprises. He was meticulous in his record keeping. He was always on military time. Education was very important to him, and he loved learning and was a voracious reader of books and magazines. His favorite music was Dixieland tunes, some of which you are hearing today. He liked music that made his foot stomp. Darrell enjoyed the community concerts and you could tell just how much by the way he would clap when applauding. Julie gave him a diary years ago, and he faithfully would write in it. Julie also would write letters once, maybe twice a week, and include a couple of jokes, which Darrell really enjoyed sharing with his coffee buddies. Besides safety with guns and tools, he was strict on seatbelts and insisted that helmets or “brain buckets” be worn when needed. Darrell always had dogs that he enjoyed as pets. He liked Griz football, nascar racing and watching sports on television. He liked his hat with all the pins on it. He liked ice cream on his Wheaties cereal. Darrell Hoover was a beloved and unique personality. He was a good friend, father, and grandfather. He was proud of the things he did in life and of the family he had. He enjoyed his time on this earth, lived a good life, gave his best to everything he did and to all he knew. Darrell closed his life story as a nineteen year old with these thoughts. “In closing, I would again like to mention the fact that if my aunt hadn’t been killed, my life would probably have been much different. I am not sorry I came to Glendive because the years I have been here are the most pleasant ones I have ever spent and I wouldn’t trade them for anything.” If Darrell were writing his autobiography today, he probably would have ended with those same words... “I wouldn’t trade the years of my life for anything.”

Tribute Wall



“ *Darrell Hoover*

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