



Donald Jones

July 16, 1934 - June 9, 2009

FORT PECK, MONTANA: Donald Jones, 74, of Fort Peck, formerly of Glendive, passed away on Thursday, June 4, 2009 at his daughter's home in Glendive. Visitation will be from 10:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. and 6:00 P.M. until 8:00 P.M. on Monday, June 8, 2009 and 9:00 A.M. until 1:00 P.M. on Tuesday, June 9, 2009 at the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home in Glendive. A Life Tribute Service will be held at 2:00 P.M. on Tuesday, June 9, 2009 at the United Methodist Church of Glendive with Celebrant Sandy Silha officiating. Interment will follow in the Dawson Memorial Cemetery in Glendive. Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home of Glendive has been entrusted with the arrangements. Don was born on July 16, 1934 in Glendive, the son of Clarence and Ruth (Matchette) Jones. Don attended elementary school in Glendive until moving with his parents to Savage, Montana where he completed his education. He married Joyce Kappel on January 30, 1953 in Glendive. He and his wife moved to Glendive in 1955 where he was a self employed contract painter. They moved to Bozeman, Montana in 1972 where they resided until the summer of 1976 when they returned back to Glendive. After Don's retirement in 1998, he and his wife moved to Rock Creek at Fort Peck where they resided until the time of his death. Don had been a member of the Glendive Moose Lodge #949 since 1978 and a member of Glendive Elks Lodge #1324 for 26 years. Don enjoyed hunting, fishing, water skiing and wood working. He enjoyed watching deer that were near his home and had photographed his wife hand feeding them. Don also took pride in having

restored a 1940 Chevrolet. Don was preceded in death by his parents, a son, Dean Jones in 1994 and a grandson, Adam Jones. Survivors include his wife, Joyce of Fort Peck, two daughter's, Donna Joy Jones of Williston, North Dakota, Dee Ann Miller and her husband John Wiseman of Glendive; one son, Kenneth Jones and his wife Pat of Broadus, Montana; one daughter-in-law, Deb Jones of Belgrade, Montana; one brother, Darrell Jones and his wife Hazel of Grand Junction, Colorado; four sisters, Betty Colby of Algona, Washington, LaDonna Roesler and her husband Emil of Glendive, Linda Robson of Belgrade, Montana, Lynn Balback and her husband George of Sheridan, Wyoming, 14 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, numerous nieces and nephews and very special friends, Jim and Mary Jo Gehmert. Remembrances and condolences may be shared with the family at: www.silvernale-silhafuneralhome.com Donald Jones Life Tribute Service June 9, 2009 Song: "The Old Rugged Cross" Welcome: Master of Ceremonies Video Tribute: Eulogy: Celebrant Donald "Donnie" Jones, the "Deer Whisperer." This title, given to Donnie by his family, came about from his unique relationship with the deer near his home at Rock Creek, on Fort Peck Lake. Every day Donnie set out food for the local deer and they came to trust him. As you can see from the picture in Donnie's memorial folder, they were wise enough to sense that he would not harm or threaten them, and Donnie could hand feed them if he chose to do so. We have seen the video tribute the family designed for today's service. At the reception following Donnie's committal service, the family will share a family video prepared by Donnie's niece, Vickie Sanders titled " Donnie Jones: The Deer Whisperer." Other animals found a friend in Donnie also. He acquired two cats, Jake and Eric, that belonged to other members of the family, but it was Donnie that they attached themselves to. Another constant companion was his dog, Tacoma. Donnie's wife, Joyce, remarked that often she did not know for sure if Donnie was talking to her or to the dog. The last weeks of Donnie's life, he and Joyce moved into Glendive and lived with Dee, and her husband, John Wiseman. The family cat became Donnie's friend, and stayed by his side the last three weeks of Donnie's life.

Perhaps these animals sensed the quality about Donnie that Donnie's grandson, Cory, loved about his grandfather, a quiet subtlety. In Cory's words, Donnie didn't get all revved up or excited about things, but you knew he was interested; you knew he cared; and you knew he was there for you. But animals were not the only ones who recognized how very special Donnie was, and the "Deer Whisperer" was not the only title Donnie was awarded during his lifetime. At his home at the lake, Donnie was known by his friends and neighbors as the "Inspector" and they bestowed Donnie with the unofficial title of the "first mayor of Rock Creek." Donnie was truly a self-made man, and he was loved and respected by all who knew him. He was, as one friend and neighbor put it, a gentleman. Donnie's early life and growing up years were spent mostly on the family farm near Savage, Montana. Donnie was the second child of six children, four girls and two boys. Donnie and his brother, Darrell, grew up as friends and co-conspirators, teasing and tormenting their sisters, and getting into mischief together. Donnie's sister, LaDonna, recalls that when their parents would go to town, they would leave the two older girls in charge, which did not set well with the two boys. After getting the girls riled up, the boys would take the small tractor and drive it around in the hills, out of reach of the girls, but where they could watch for the return of their parents. When Donnie was old enough to drive a vehicle, he often asked to take the family car to town on the week-ends. But Donnie's dad did not always let them go. And he would keep track of the odometer, knowing it was five miles to Savage, five miles back and a mile or two of driving around. So if there was eleven or twelve miles on the odometer, he would know that Donnie had taken the car without permission. Donnie and Darrell soon learned how to unhook the odometer, and they would take LaDonna with them if she didn't rat them out. Another activity of Donnie's was hunting. Whether with family or friends, many a day and night, was spent hunting jackrabbits or deer. The deer season was all year long for Donnie. Venison steak was his favorite. One year there was a shortage of does, and so there was no designated hunting

season for them. Donnie and Doug Barone were out in the farm truck and managed to shoot a couple of does. After throwing the does in the back of the truck, Doug suggested that they take a back road to the farm. Donnie said no, no one would think to look in the back of a big farm truck. He was right. A lesser known activity of Donnie's was his high school basketball career. Donnie's younger sister, Lynn, learned about him playing years later when she was going through some of his old high school yearbooks. Several students had written in his yearbook about him playing basketball and how fast he was and how they were all looking forward to his playing the next year. When she asked Donnie about this, he sheepishly told her the story. Yes, he was fast. Donnie had managed to get in a game Savage was playing against Poplar. He stole the ball and raced down the court, far ahead of everyone and scored a basket. Problem was, he scored it on Poplar's end of the court. Poplar won the game by two points. It was also in high school that Donnie began dating Joyce. They often double-dated with Doug and his girlfriend, Pat. Much time was spent with the four of them going to movies, rollerskating and hunting rabbits. After marrying Joyce, Donnie often bragged that he had married the "prettiest girl in Savage." Joyce says not a day went by in all their years of marriage that Donnie didn't tell her that he loved her. And he complimented her on her cooking every evening, even if she just made hotdogs. Daughter Dee doesn't recall her parents ever fighting or even arguing. Son Ken says they never saw their father angry, except for once, when Joyce used a swear word and Donnie reprimanded her, saying that she did not need to talk that way. And although Donnie was not much for disciplining his children, he had a certain look he would give them and they knew they had crossed the line. Family outings were spent at the lake, boating, waterskiing, and fishing. Children and grandchildren all learned to waterski from Donnie. Donnie could waterski all day, covering most of Fort Peck. Family was very important to Donnie. Donnie's oldest child, Donna was named after him, as was his oldest grandchild, granddaughter, Dawn, spelled differently, though. His grandson, Brashdon has "don" at the end of his name, and grandson Brion's name is

spelled with an “o, n” to honor Donnie. Donnie was a very special grandfather. Granddaughter Dawn loved being the only grandchild for years with Grandpa to spoil her. One summer when she stayed with Donnie and Joyce, she helped him paint by moving the scaffolding for him. Grandson Brashdon and Donnie had a very close relationship. When Brashdon was about four, he and grandpa were headed for the dump. Brashdon asked Donnie what was in the forest on the hill. Donnie told Brashdon that was a cemetery. Brashdon of course had more questions. When they were coming back from the dump, Donnie took Brashdon up to the cemetery and talked to him about what a cemetery was. Brashdon wanted to know if two people could be buried together. Donnie told his grandson that he thought they could. Brashdon thought he and Grandpa should be buried together. As an afterthought, Brashdon suggested that he, Brashdon, be on top, because he didn’t want to be squished. When Brashdon left to join the Air Force, it was a very difficult time for Donnie. Grandson Cory’s special memories are of fishing and hunting with his grandfather. Donnie gave Cory his first bow and about 30 arrows, and taught him to shoot. When Cory was fairly accomplished at it, Donnie told Cory that he had to learn to shoot left handed if he wanted to have any of Donnie’s things. Donnie had lost the sight in his dominant eye and he shot left-handed. So, Cory learned to shoot like his grandfather. Granddaughter, Melody loved her grandfather for his kind heart. The teasing that began with his sisters when he was growing up, Donnie continued through the generations to his great-grandchildren. Donnie loved to find humor in life. He was a quiet man, but he had a wry sense of humor and many witty one-liners to throw at you. When Darrell was a newly licensed pilot and showing Donnie his expertise, Darrell tried a unique short field take-off from a gravel road that included a fence putting a hole in the tail of the plane. Donnie’s only comment was, “Is that how pilots usually take-off?” For a sister nervous about flying, Donnie pulled a large screw from the airplane’s overhead bin and commented to her, “Where do you suppose this belongs?” When Jim Gehmert asked Donnie when he was going to put his new boat into the lake, Donnie replied

“It’s new and clean and I don’t want to get it all wet!” Gary Huncovsky was building his cabin at the lake, and he called Donnie to ask him to do some perfa-taping and painting. Donnie reminded Gary that he was retired and besides he only worked for friends.....Donnie came right over and did it for Gary. When the gals at the lake formed a chapter of the Red Hat Ladies, they bought all their men special shirts, dressed up in their red and purple, and delivered the shirts as a group. Donnie was mowing when they caught up with him. He affectionately teased them about looking like “clowns.” When granddaughter, Dawn, was going to Arizona for the summer, he tried every to talk her out of going, resorting to bribing her with lots of money and then telling her when she had a layover, to find a security guard and stick with him, and stay away from the people in sheets, selling flowers in the airport. When Donnie was doctoring in Billings on a regular basis, he and Joyce would often stay with their nephew, Steve Roesler. After appointments, Donnie would rest or sleep in Steve’s recliner. Steve would hover a bit and always checked with Donnie on how he was feeling. Donnie’s invariable response would be that he was fine but Steve’s dog hadn’t moved in hours and appeared to be dead. Donnie was not a complainer and never lost his sense of humor. Donnie was a great storyteller. Dee tells that according to Donnie, he won many wars, and had many excellent adventures. Joyce, of course, heard many of Donnie’s stories over the years. She sometimes had a hard time knowing if Donnie was telling the embellished truth or just another story. She learned that if Donnie started with the words “I think” or I guess”, it probably was a story coming on. One habit Donnie performed almost daily was to tell Joyce that he would give her a hundred dollars if she would clean his glasses. Joyce never saw the money. When Donnie lost the sight in one of his eyes, he reduced the amount to fifty dollars. One of Donnie’s rituals was his early morning coffee rounds. Donnie was up and at it by 5 am. And he loved to coffee. While living in Glendive, he would hit Hardees and the Trail Star. At the lake he would go over to his neighbor, Bruce Robinette’s, and they would have their coffee, take

a ride around the lake to check out everything and see who was putting their boats in the water that day. Bruce and Donnie also painted each others houses. Donnie who had worked most of his life as a contract painter, taught Bruce that you never painted on the sunny side of the house. Donnie was very meticulous about his work. One of the things that everyone at the lake enjoyed was when Donnie built himself a potato gun. He would shoot that thing off over the lake and just have a ball. He built a marshmallow gun with one of his grandsons and they shot up the house and everyone in it with marshmallows. Another neighbor swears Donnie could smell brownies from 3 miles away. Donnie did have one trait that annoyed his family...he loved the movie "Dances With Wolves". Donnie watched that movie a million times and because he knew the dialog, he would speak the parts with the actors, driving those who watched with him up the wall. But he loved his westerns, especially that one. Another favorite of Donnie's was to visit his son, Ken. Ken does ranch work and Donnie loved to go to the brandings, help with the ranch work and hunt prairie dogs with Ken. But for all the things Donnie will be remembered for, for all the things that will be missed by those who knew him, perhaps the biggest thing will be his kindness and caring ways. Donnie was not one to express his feelings with words, he just didn't talk that much. But you knew he loved you, you new he enjoyed your company, and you knew you were important to him and a big part of his life. One special moment for daughter, Donna, was at her wedding during the father-daughter dance, when Donnie told her he loved her. All was right with the world! Throughout his life, Donnie was hardworking and a good provider. He was generous and a soft touch, he would do anything to help anyone out. Donnie was one of the good ones. He was greatly loved and he will be greatly missed! Let us now listen to a song that characterizes Donnie, "Wind Beneath My Wings." Song: Wind Beneath My Wings" by Bette Midler Sharing: As was mentioned at the beginning of the service, we will have a time for sharing. If you have a story or memory of Donnie that you would like to share, you are invited to come to the microphone during these next few minutes. Please introduce yourself. We will

begin with a good friend and neighbor of Donnie's, Jim Gehmert. Celebrant:
Closing The last years were very hard on Donnie. First came the heart problems and then the cancer. But Donnie had an inner strength and toughness to draw on. And he had his family and his many friends to lend support. His sister Lynn went to many doctor appointments with him; nephew Steve opened his home to Joyce and Donnie as a place to stay when doctoring; the friends and neighbors at the lake hung a huge banner to welcome the 1st Mayor of Rock Creek home after having a kidney removed. And Donnie's daughter Dee and her husband John took Donnie and Joyce into their home, to help care for Donnie and be by his side those last weeks of his life, so he did not have to die in the hospital. All of these things and more signify the great love felt for this special man. Joyce, Donna, Ken, Dee, and family, we recognize your great loss and we grieve with you and for you. In a short time it will be Father's Day, and the absence of Donnie will bring about a fresh sense of loss to his family. And so it will be with all the firsts, the first birthdays, the first anniversaries, the first holidays. We should never assume that a friend wants to mourn alone. Be very present at these times. Call, send a card or e-mail, drop in for a cup of coffee, and let the family know that you too miss Donnie and will remember him. Continue to share your stories about Donnie and keep his memory alive. "To live in hearts we leave behind, is not to die." Please listen to a verse chosen by the family for today. Master of Ceremonies: Beside the Waters By Thomas P. McHugh Beside the quiet rippling streams my Lord is leading me. All nature bears His spoken word in everything I see. For lo, He comes to comfort me, and sits down by my side. He whispers in the breezes blowing gently through my mind. The waters ripple gently on, so quiet and serene. And on its waves I see His truth reflecting like a dream. And mounted up on eagles' wings, the Master makes me soar. Above the waters running still and all because He's Lord. Reflected on the ripples are the trees and skies above, Resplendent with the sun, as warm as God's abiding love. A place where I find solitude without a single care. Beside the waters deep and still, my father leads me there. Celebrant:

Closing ceremony During Donnie's lifetime, he touched many lives. Just as each fingerprint is unique, no two the same, it is the same for the impact that our lives have on others. Each of us has a unique soul and every time we come into contact with others, we leave our soul print. As you are ushered from your seats, you are invited to come forward to leave your fingerprints upon Donnie's casket to remain, blend together and forever signify the impact Donnie's touch has left on your life. His touch on the lives of those around him will be carried in our hearts forever. May your handprint on Donnie's casket be one of friendship in honor of his life and to the belief that "a life shared is a life to never be forgotten." That concludes Donnie Jones' life tribute service. Thank you all for being here for this important time. Song: "Time in a Bottle" and handprint ceremony

Tribute Wall



“ *Donald Jones*

December 07, 2022 at 04:10 PM