



Earl W. Johnson

February 6, 1913 - January 5, 2006

Earl W. Johnson, age 92, of Glendive, passed away on Friday, December 30, 2005 at the Glendive Medical Center Extended Care Facility in Glendive. A Life Tribute Service will be held at 10:00 A.M., Thursday, January 5, 2006 in the Chapel of the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home in Glendive with Celebrant Sandy Silha officiating. Interment will be in the Dawson Memorial Cemetery in Glendive. Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home of Glendive is entrusted with arrangements. Earl was born on February 6, 1913, the son of Charles P. and Sofia (Anderson) Johnson. He was raised and educated in Glendive. In the mid 1930's, Earl worked for the Civilian Conservation Corps and worked on building the Fort Peck Dam. Earl married Faye Crawford in 1936 and to this union three children were born. They were later divorced. He then married Wanda Wortman and she preceded him in death. In 1937, Earl went to work as a pipe fitter for the Northern Pacific Railroad which later became the Burlington Northern Railroad. He resided in Livingston, Montana from 1958 until 1971 when he returned to Glendive. Earl retired from the railroad in the mid 1970's. Earl enjoyed hunting in his earlier years. He also did string and wire art. Earl was a member of the Moose Lodge #949. Earl was a familiar figure around the Dairy Queen for several years and the employees called him "grandpa". Earl is preceded in death by his parents and his siblings, Florence, Harry, Elsie, Grant, Raymond, Walter, Charles, and Theodore. Survivors include his son, Larry Johnson of Glendive; two daughters, Jean Kiel and her husband Jerry of Vancouver, Washington and Bonnie Schober of St. Regis,

Montana; his stepson, Lee Wortman of Alliance, Nebraska; his sister, Mildred "Sis" Dalsasso of Glendive; his brother, Roy Johnson of Mesa, Arizona; seven grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren; numerous nieces and nephews.

Eulogy by Celebrant Sandy Silha: Some men move quietly through life. They don't make a lot of noise complaining or bragging about what they do; they just do it. They don't have great expectations or demand great things of others, they just keep busy doing what's in front of them, taking life as it comes. Earl W. Johnson was such a man. Earl was one of eleven children in the family of Charles and Sofia Johnson. Earl's brother, Roy, remembers Earl being the quietest one. If Earl had something to say, he would say it, but he wasn't one to bend your ear with a lot of words. Earl's children also remember their father as a quiet man. Earl was raised and educated here in Glendive. One of brother Roy's memories of he and Earl growing up, were many trips with the neighborhood boys into the badlands, especially hiking up Hungry Joe with lunch in hand. As a young man living during the depression years of the 1930's, Earl went to work for the Civilian Conservation Corps and worked on building Fort Peck Dam. In 1936, Earl married Faye Crawford. He and Faye had three children, a son Larry, and two daughters, Bonnie and Jean. Earl became a pipe fitter for the railroad and worked in Glendive until 1958. At that time the railroad had a big lay-off and Earl was one of those left without a job. He immediately went to Livingston, MT., and got on with the railroad there. After a time, Earl and Faye were divorced, and Earl eventually married Wanda Wortman, who preceded him in death. Earl retired from Burlington Northern Railroad in the mid 1970's. The pin you may have noticed on Earl's collar today, was presented to him by Burlington Northern upon his retirement. Although the railroad was how Earl made a living, he was always busy working at various things. Brother Roy says of Earl, "He could outwork any man, even me. He was a hardworking cuss." Roy also recalls he, Ted and Earl working and helping their brother Grant on Grant's farm near Glendive. Earl loved to work the dirt, planting and harvesting, especially potatoes. And although Earl lived in town, his children remember the huge garden he kept,

planted and worked. Earl, along with others on the southside, would also get “chickies” in the spring and raise them. Earl’s children talk about the dill and horseradish that grew wild in their father’s garden and how he would pull it out with the weeds. People would come by the house wanting to buy dill from Earl, and he would give it away just to get rid of it. Jean, Earl’s youngest daughter, has fond memories of the row of sweet peas that her Dad would put in his garden, knowing they were her favorite flower. Earl also took care of a couple of household tasks when the children were growing up. One was cooking supper for the family. Earl got home from work earlier than Faye, so he would get supper going. Bonnie also recalls helping her father do laundry once a week. Bonnie would be called on to haul the dirty towels and sheets downstairs for her dad to launder. She remembers this because, invariably, in maneuvering the steps with the load of laundry, she would fall. While living in Glendive, Earl would spend many evenings and week-ends doing plumbing work with a couple of friends. Their biggest project was the old Glendive hospital. Earl and his friends did a lot of plumbing in that building. Also in their spare time, Earl and Faye would help out on the Geritana land when help was needed. Earl would many times be put in charge of branding, and afterwards, all would get together for a big spaghetti feed. Earl’s son, Larry remembers going to the Geritana place and into the badlands and cutting cedar fence posts, hauling the posts out by horse and wagon, and selling them. Larry also recalls Earl being a good mechanic. Which brings to mind an incident Larry’s remembers as his father “saving” his sisters. Bonnie, Jean and friends had driven and pushed Larry’s Model A into the yard by the swingset and Larry did not see any humor in this prank. Even Bonnie and Jean recognized the favor their father did for them by his intercession with Larry. During their growing up years, Larry, Bonnie and Jean really don’t recall many shows of emotion from their father. He didn’t verbally express his love, but they knew he did love them. Discipline usually did not come from Earl. Spankings and groundings were almost non-existent. Jean does recall getting grounded once but only for

one night. And Jean smiles at the one time Earl wouldn't let her date a young man. The fellow who wanted to take Jean out had a reputation she wasn't aware of and Earl refused to let her go out with this one particular guy. Jean didn't really care whether she dated the young man or not, but it was just unusual for her father to do this type of "boyfriend screening". Bonnie's special memory of her father is all the times he would go hunting or fishing and would ask his friends if it was alright if he took "his girl" along. Bonnie was a tomboy and loved to go with her father. She didn't necessarily hunt and fish but felt special to go with her father and share the experiences. Lee Wortman, Earl's step-son, also remembers sharing some good fishing days. Earl married Lee's mother, Wanda, when Lee was in junior high and Lee appreciates Earl raising him through those difficult teen years and helping make him the man he is today. Besides enjoying hunting and fishing, Earl did string and wire art, and throughout life enjoyed playing cards. When Larry was in high school, he and his friends would come to the Johnson's home after football and basketball games to eat and play cards until the wee hours of the morning. Earl would join in and give these young fellows a hard time about their eating. Earl would sometimes kid them and say "why don't you guys go home and eat" and he would push his chair back from the kitchen table and sit against the refrigerator door. When the boys wanted to get something out of the fridge, they just moved Earl, chair and all to the side and got what they wanted. Everyone had great fun with this. The other boys' parents even started sending food to the Johnson's because it became a gathering place for the kids to eat and play cards. After Earl's retirement from the railroad, when Larry owned Dairy Queen here in Glendive, Earl began helping Larry at DQ. Earl would go down to DQ in the morning and cut up chicken and potatoes to be broasted. Eventually this became "Earl's job" and no one could do it better. Another job Earl took at Dairy Queen was taking care of the flower beds. Earl tended to the flowers like they were his kids. The young people at Dairy Queen all enjoyed working with Earl and fondly called him "grandpa". Christy, Earl's real granddaughter tells of her grandpa Earl riding a red bicycle around

town. Christy and grandpa would ride down to the bakery and have bear claws for a treat. When Larry sold Dairy Queen and Earl's job ended, Earl eventually lived at Grandview Retirement Home for a short time and in late 1991 moved into the Glendive Medical Center Extended Care Facility. One of Earl's favorite activities was when there was music and dancing. Earl would dance with all the women, and this made him quite popular. With all except one that is...Earl's sister, Mildred "Sis" Dalsasso went to visit her brother on one of these dance days and came home just mad as could be. Earl had danced with everyone except her. But Sis and Earl were especially close. When Sis moved into the nursing home, Earl and Sis would sit in their wheelchairs by the nurse's station, holding hands and not talking. Sis made the comment one day that there was no need for her and Earl to talk, they always knew what the other was thinking. During the first years Earl spent at the extended care, Earl was still mobile and got around well. He and another resident, Ralph, would share a special treat with the other residents. Ralph always made popcorn and Earl would deliver the popcorn around to everyone. The nurses at the extended care facility remember Earl as a person with pleasant features and a welcoming way. Because of this, it became his job to hand out the programs for the special events and activities, such as Christmas programs, that the extended care had for residents and guests. Step-son Lee mentions how Earl's eyes would light up to see visitors. The last time Lee visited Earl at the extended care, Earl patted the bed and told Lee's wife to sit there and pointed to the chair for Lee to sit in. When Earl's great-grandchild Brianne would visit, Brianne would always be lifted onto great-grandpa's bed and she never left his room without candy from a jar beside Earl's bed. Earl always made Brianne feel special and that the jar of candy was there just for her. Earl resided at the Glendive Medical Center Extended Care Facility the longest of any resident. Earl W. Johnson died December 30, 2005, at the age of 92, at the Glendive Medical Center Extended Care Facility. Let us listen to the song "Old Rugged Cross" which the family of Earl selected to be heard today. Song: "Old Rugged Cross" Closing: A quiet, hardworking man has

passed this way. His presence has been felt by community, friends and family. As you grieve for Earl, as you say your final good-bye, remember him, he is part of you and you are part of him. As family and as friends, let us acknowledge Earl for the man he was and the life he led. Comfort can be found in sharing memories, in recognizing the imprint Earl's life has left on our lives, and in the hope that we too shall be remembered. The following poem seemed to express a bit of what Earl W. Johnson was. "He's the hard working, thoughtful, and sensitive kind, An honest and warmhearted man... He's simply a person who's doing his best To live as well as he can. You'll probably not see his name up in lights, His goal is not glory or fame. He may not be chosen man of the year, And not all will remember his name. He most likely values the people he loves And friendship, to him is a prize. Contentment with life, can be seen in his face, And happiness shines in his eyes. He'll share what he has with someone in need, Find time to help those in distress... He may not be famous, he may not be rich, But at living, this man is a success."

Tribute Wall



“ *Earl W. Johnson*

December 07, 2022 at 04:10 PM