



George R. Skogas

February 11, 1939 - December 23, 2005

George R. Skogas, age 66, of Miles City, formerly of Glendive, passed away on Wednesday, December 21, 2005 at the Holy Rosary Extended Care Facility in Miles City. A Life Tribute Service will be held at 2:00 P.M., Friday, December 23, 2005 in the Chapel of the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home in Glendive with Celebrant Sandy Silha officiating. Interment will be in the Dawson County Cemetery in Glendive. Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home of Glendive is entrusted with arrangements. George was born on February 11, 1939 in Glendive, the son of Gerhard Herman and Helen Dorothy (Blackwell) Skogas. George attended the Lervold School in rural Lindsay, Montana. Following his education, George worked as a farm hand for various farmers in the Lindsay area and continued to live on the family farm, located approximately seven miles northeast of Lindsay. In 1990, he moved to a group home in Miles City. George has been a resident of the Holy Rosary Extended Care Facility for the past six years. George enjoyed reading automotive and western books, antique tractor and western magazines, train sets and cats. He especially enjoyed attending threshing bees. George was preceded in death by his father, his grandparents; his brother, Wayne and an infant sister, Arlene. Survivors include his mother, Helen Skogas of Glendive; four sisters, Marlene Hines and her husband Rudy of University, Maryland, June Boje and her husband Tom of Glendive, Sharon Unruh and her husband Art of Circle, Montana and Jánet Hermann and her husband Rick of Kent, Washington; numerous aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews. Eulogy by Celebrant Sandy

Silha: George R. Skogas was a unique personality. Some of his character traits were very strong and would create conflict in his life. You see, for George, life was an exact science. Everything had its place and he knew just where that place was. George was always very particular about his “things” and his personal space. If you moved something of his, such as a magazine or book, or items in his room, he would put it right back where it had been. But this would upset him greatly. He was not good at sharing and his room and his things were off limits. George also did not respond well to authority figures. He was quite a non-conformist. But beneath George’s gruff exterior was a side that was very caring. George was born to Gerhard and Helen Skogas, February 11, 1939, in Glendive, Montana. George grew up, attended school and lived for most of his life in rural Lindsay, Montana, on the family farm. Being a farm boy, George was around many animals, but his favorites were the farm cats. These were his special pets and he would try to get them past his mother and into the house. Once in a while he would succeed, and Helen would let him bring a cat in. If you had a cat for a pet, George would always ask about the cat and how it was doing. Throughout life, George liked other animals, but nothing topped a cat. Niece Kelly laughs when telling about stopping to visit George this past year. She wanted to show him the new b’shawn puppy she and her family had just acquired. When Kelly walked in and introduced the puppy to George, George just looked at Kelly and said “I like cats.” George had another lifelong love that began when he was a youngster, cowboy boots. Helen recalls how cute George looked in a pair of riding jodhpurs and cowboy boots that zipped up the front. George would zip and unzip those boots continuously until they finally wore out. And his niece Jacky, remembers the tiny feet George had as a man that always sported cowboy boots. His sister Marlene will never forget when George was a little boy; he was so proud of his first new cowboy boots. Whenever they would go to town he would sit on the sidewalk and take them off and put them on, over and over again. During his younger years, George would do chores. One of his jobs was to bring in coal for the cook stove. Every piece had to be just the

right size and fit a certain way in the coal bucket. It took George a long time to finish his chores. George would also follow his father around when Gerhard worked on the machinery. George was always fascinated by the machinery on the farm and wanted to see how everything worked, and what made them run. He had a lifelong interest in antique tractors and loved going to threshing bees just to see the big machines work. He was an avid reader of automotive, western and antique tractor books and magazines. But for all his reading, George did not like school. George and his siblings, had to walk a quarter mile to school each day. George was invariably late and then would have to stay in for recess. George didn't seem to mind this punishment and sometimes seemed to enjoy not having to go out for recess. His parents noticed other issues with George but didn't really understand what was going on with their son or have the resources or knowledge to help George. Eventually, they took him to a doctor, who diagnosed George with schizophrenia. Institutionalization was recommended for George, and this was tried for a short time, but then Helen brought George home. George was also on medication, which Helen felt did help some. But George came to feel that even the medication was not controlling his disorder. Ultimately, George and his family learned to accept and live with these personality disorders. George worked as a farm hand on the family farm and also for various farmers in the area. When neighbors were short-handed he would help feed the animals, or during the busy planting season, he would keep the drills filled with seed. George didn't leave home much. His sister Marlene says "George was always happy to see her and her family when they would come to Montana in the summer. He especially liked her husband, Rudy. The only time George went to Maryland to visit Marlene and Rudy was for their daughter, Cindy's, wedding. He flew all by himself. George really enjoyed the sites of Washington, D.C." Niece Jacky recalls her Uncle George's caring side. When she would visit the farm, Grandma Helen would have Jacky go out to the chicken coop and collect eggs. Grandma would stress, do not break the eggs, which Uncle George would then repeat.

Jacky hated getting the eggs because she didn't like the chickens flapping around her or those mean old roosters, and she had to worry about breaking eggs and making grandma mad. But after getting out to the chicken coop, Uncle George would make his way out and help her collect eggs. Jacky also tells about a big, heavy sled grandpa built out of two by fours that she, Vonda and LaRae would ride on with Uncle George pulling them. But it made him quite nervous when they would go behind their grandparent's house and sled down a hill onto a frozen dam. He would hover around nervously, watching them as they played. Another thing Uncle George would do is tease. Niece Kelly remembers she and her sisters playing in a playhouse at the farm and Uncle George locking them in and getting them all riled up, teasing them that he wasn't going to let them out. And niece Cindy, e-mailed the following: "What I remember most about Uncle George is he loved animals, especially cats. He always seemed concerned about their welfare and his favorite cat, Blackie, lived a long life on the farm. One thing he would do is take us for rides around the yard on Queenie the horse and that was my favorite. He was also a big teaser. Whenever we visited he would tease me about going to see the purple horses, then I would say there isn't such a thing as purple horses. He would go on and on about purple horses just to see me get mad." Uncle George's caring side would also come out with his great-nephew, Kale and great-niece, Jayla. When George would visit his sister, June, and she would be babysitting Kale and Jayla, George would go outside and push them on their trikes or just sit on the front steps and make sure they didn't leave the yard. Kale recalls he and Uncle George playing farming with Kale's many toy tractors on the kitchen counter. Jayla's most vivid memory of Uncle George is him wearing a red plaid flannel shirt "all the time." In 1990, George moved to a group home in Miles City. Although he would complain to Helen about the home, she felt he did like the atmosphere of having to help do chores there and keep busy. George suffered a heart attack, and spent the last six years as a resident of the Holy Rosary Extended Care Facility in Miles City, Montana. He became the unofficial tour guide, taking it upon himself to help new residents get around

and find where they needed to be, until they became familiar with the facility and its routines. He was especially helpful assisting the other residents to and from their rooms to the lunchroom. J'anet, George's sister hold a special memory of George close to her heart. Last winter, on a visit to the nursing home to visit George, J'anet recalls a perfect picture of her brother. George was walking around outside the nursing home as they drove up. It was cold and George's cheeks were red and with his beard and his little round belly he stood there. When he recognized who it was, his eyes lit up and began to twinkle and a big grin spread across his face. J'anet couldn't have planned a more perfect picture of George, he looked like a little gnome. Her thought of him today is that God must have needed one more elf to help him this Christmas season. It has been said that we do not remember days, we remember moments. As you remember your moments with George may they bring a smile to your face, and comfort to your heart. The next song was brought here by George's sister, J'anet, and has special meaning to her. George was afraid of the dark and would leave a light on at night. J'anet and the family send this song out to George to comfort him. Let us listen to "Lord, Send Your Angels". Song: "Lord, Send Your Angels" Celebrant: We have gathered today to say a final good-bye to George Skogas. It is an important day when we stop to bear witness to a person's life and times among us, the difference his living and dying made among family and community and to take time to express our grief, our hope, our memories. This is the time to share the many thoughts and stories with each other that George has left with you. This is a time to laugh and cry and find comfort together. George is a part of each of you; you and he have touched each others lives and hearts, and this can never be changed. The significance of George's life, will continue to show up in your lives in ways and at times that may be unexpected. "We live on in the lives of those we touch, We live on in the lives those who love us, No one is dead until they are forgotten." Remember George Skogas. Eulogy by Celebrant Sandy Silha:

Tribute Wall



“ *George R. Skogas*

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