



John E. Kubesh

July 4, 1918 - December 22, 2010

Glendive, Montana: John Edwin Kubesh, age 92, died on Friday, December 17, 2010 at the Eastern Montana Veterans Home in Glendive. Visitation will be held on Tuesday, December 21, 2010 from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. and 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. in the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home of Glendive. A second visitation will be held on Wednesday, December 22, 2010 from 10:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. at the Evangelical Church of North America of Glendive. A Life Tribute service will be held on Wednesday, December 22, 2010 at 11:00 A.M. at the Evangelical Church with Celebrant Sandy Silha and Pastor Robert Canen officiating. Interment with military honors will be in the Dawson Memorial Cemetery in Glendive. Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home of Glendive is entrusted with the arrangements. John was born on July 4, 1918 in Dawson County Montana the son of John and Julia (Dvorak) Kubesh. He received his elementary education in the Twin Butte and Lervold Schools in rural Dawson County and his high school education at Dawson County High School in Glendive. On February 8, 1944, John entered the United States Army Air Corps. As a Flight Officer with the 8th Air Force stationed in England during World War II, John piloted a B-17 on 29 combat missions. On August 17, 1944, John married Alicia Nell Archer in Billings, Montana. Upon his honorable discharge from military service in December of 1945, John returned to Dawson County where he and Nell farmed on his father's homestead northwest of Glendive. Through the years, John acquired more land as he continued to farm and ranch. John and Nell were blessed with seven children;

two boys and five girls. Terry, the oldest son, and Grant, the youngest, worked with John on the farm. The girls, Juanita, Janette, Nancy Jo, Barbara and Patricia appreciated their dad's love of the land and their rural roots. John had served as the Post Commander for the Glendive Veterans of Foreign Wars, had also served on the Dawson Airport Commission, the Governor's Essential Air Service Task Force, the Montana Grain Growers Association, the Glendive Hospital Board, the Lindsay Elevator Board, the Dawson County Rural School Board, the Selective Service Board, the Federal Land Bank and Toastmasters. John loved flying and he found a way to work it into his love of the ranch and farm life. He continued to fly until the age of 85 and was actively engaged in the day to day operation of the farm and ranch until health no longer allowed him to work. John had been a resident of the Eastern Montana Veterans Home since July of 2008. John was preceded in death by his parents; a brother, George Kubesh; and a sister, Marie, in childhood. Survivors include his wife Nell of Glendive; his children, Terry (Connie) Kubesh of Glendive, Juanita (Rusty) Martin of Billings, Janette (Frank) Legato of Glendive, Nancy Jo Kubesh of Billings, Barbara Kubesh of Seattle, Washington, Patricia (Carl) Theriault of Fort Kent, Maine and Grant (Mary) Kubesh of Glendive; his grandchildren, Rob (Fran) Kubesh, Blaine (Siobhan) Kubesh, Rachel (Greg) Huncovsky, Ross Martin, Wesley Martin, Jennifer (Vern) Miller, Gina (Mark) Michael, Brent (Melodie) Gross, Amy (Scott) Neuman, Sara Gross, Vladimir Kovalik, Jean-Luc Theriault, Joe Theriault, Zachary (Megan) Kubesh and Julia Kubesh; his great grandchildren, Paige & Kaitlin Michael, Kara & Kelsi Miller, Garrett & Alaina Gross, Elise & Evan Neuman, Meghan & Ciara Kubesh, Aidan & Claire Kubesh, and Landon, Izaak & Beau Huncovsky. Eulogy: John Kubesh had three big loves in his life, the land, the skies, and most importantly, his family. John's roots in farming ran deep. Son Terry and grandson Blaine traveled to Czechoslovakia and researched the Kubesh ancestors. They went back into the fourteenth century with the family tree. The Kubeshes had always been landowners and farmers. Land in Czechoslovakia is still owned by one of the relatives even now. In the early

1900's, John's father emigrated to the United States, and eventually homesteaded in Dawson County. John was the middle of three children. He and his brother, George helped their "Pop" and "Mum" on the farm, taking turns going to school. A strong work ethic was instilled at an early age. It was during his teenage years that John learned to fly, and it became a lifelong passion of his. After getting his pilots license, John enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps with the intention of entering flight school. He needed more math credits to qualify for flight school, so he went to Rocky Mountain College in Billings in order to get the needed credits. It was in Billings that he met the woman he would love and share his life with, Nell Archer, who was also going to college. According to Nell's personal written memoirs, John graduated, had a week's leave, and proposed marriage to Nell. They were married by a judge in the home of a friend and were on a train to Nebraska to a marshalling base the next day. John's brother, George, sent John enough money to buy an Indian motorcycle so he and Nell would have transportation while they were there. John enjoyed the motorcycle immensely, while for Nell, it was a great adventure. One memory that stuck out for Nell was John bringing home watermelon in the saddlebags for their supper. John was transferred to Oklahoma for training on B17 bomber crews. John and Nell rode the motorcycle there, breaking down on the way. It was night, and John coasted into a farmyard and spent most of the night tearing down the engine and fixing it under the yard light. They arrived in Oklahoma at the base just in time for John to report in. The newly weds had a couple of months together while John trained before returning to Nebraska with his squadron to prepare to ship out to England. John's mother came for a visit before he left, and John departed for England in late December. Nell went to Montana to wait for John, where she found out she was pregnant. Meanwhile, John went to England through Newfoundland. It was so cold there that many of the bombers couldn't make it off the runway. There were very few of the group that John ever saw again. As a Flight Officer with the 8th Air Force stationed in England during

World War II, John piloted a B-17 on 29 combat missions. Many were bombing runs over German cities. John didn't talk much about the missions but he did say that he suffered nightmares from the Dresden bombings. John would always volunteer to fly missions that weren't bombing runs. He would fly whiskey runs, and even runs to pick up fallen soldiers and bring them back in the body bags. John was a by the book pilot and he had no time for the crews that would party and then go up on missions. After his honorable discharge in 1945, John was faced with a decision, should he begin a career flying for the airlines, or should he return home to Montana to farm. John chose to return to the farm. Nell, and their new son, Terry, joined John on the Kubesh homestead, northwest of Glendive. Brother George had his own farm by now, and John's parents moved into town not long after John's return. John and Nell began building their life and legacy together. They raised seven children on the farm, sons, Terry and Grant, and daughters Juanita, Janette, Nancy Jo, Barbara, and Patricia. In the years to come, the family came to include in-laws, 15 grandchildren, and 15 great-grandchildren. As the family grew over the years, so did the farm, with John and Nell acquiring surrounding farms and land. John had both grain crops and livestock. He enjoyed his farm dogs and he loved his cats. He tried raising guinea hens, ducks and geese. John wasn't much of a horse man, but he had horses for the kids to ride. He kept up on the latest techniques of farming and was often the first to try new things. Did he ever regret choosing farming? Yes! When the hail would come, or prices for grain and livestock wouldn't cover expenses, John would look longing at the sky and comment that "even when you do everything right, it didn't always pay." But he never quit. Instead he flourished because of his unending energy, dedication, hard work and know how. And John learned to use his love of flying in every aspect of his life. He flew the ranch to check the cows or look at the pattern of the summer fallowing in the fields. If you wanted to go with him flying, you better get up early and be ready to go or he left without you. He flew to get somewhere or take family or friends places. During a political campaign year, he would fly candidates around the state. He flew

the life flights for the hospital. He took kids and grandkids for joy rides, even grandson, Brent who got airsick. But no one turned down a ride with John; he was just so cool to be around. John flew to just to fly. He loved it. If he could get airborne at all, the rest of the day was easy for him. When he flew, he might get caught up in the joy of flying, forget to navigate, and get a bit off course, but he always found his way. Or he might feel the urge to do a loop-de-loop, but he'd ask you first if you wanted to. John wanted you to enjoy the experience also. According to grandson Rob, his favorite plane was a tail dragger. That is what the B17's were. John could execute 3 point landings over and over that were picture perfect. You might learn about flying from watching what John did, but if you were serious about flying, he made you go to a flight instructor. A favorite saying of John's was "There are old pilots, and there are bold pilots, but there are no old, bold pilots." John was about 85 when he flew for the last time. Actually, John loved any mode of transportation and had tried about everything. He loved motorcycles and always had one. He used four wheelers, boats, cars trucks, whatever was available. John got himself a truck that could carry water so he and the boys could respond to fires. He had a blade to do road maintenance. He was particular about his roads. John was a good, and dependable neighbor, generous with his time, energy, equipment, and knowledge. He was involved in many farming organizations and also politics. John and Nell were both staunch Democrats. Both were involved in many community organizations and served on many boards. They knew the importance of volunteering time and effort for worthwhile projects and causes. John was an early riser. Every day after lunch, John would lie down, perhaps even on the floor and take a 20 minute nap. That nap kept him going the rest of the day. John always had his tool box with him. He could fix anything. His favorite tool was a pliers. He had many and was always looking for more to acquire. John's energy was amazing; he never stopped. Several people, in sending condolences, commented that he should have written a book about his life. The truth was, he was too busy, too active to write a book or even read one. He read magazines, Nat'l

Geographic, aeronautical ones, farming journals, or the newspaper, something he could do quickly, a little at a time. And besides he hated paperwork. He left that to Nell. He did do an audio interview that can be accessed, with the Montana Historical Society in 1981, called Montana at Work Oral History Project. It is about his time on the homestead and farm. John was a quiet man with a large presence. He rarely raised his voice, except maybe to rail or vent at the Republicans, but he could just give you a “look” and you knew you messed up. John had a great smile, a wonderful twinkle to his eye, a softly teasing manner, and a love of subtle practical jokes. He might tie your shoes together, or put pebbles in them when you were scurrying to stay with him and go for an airplane ride. While riding with him, he might dip a wing or bank sharply to get a reaction from you, or in a vehicle, he would seem to cut a corner short while going a bit fast, all the while looking at you sideways and smiling. When combining, if you left a fringe of wheat standing, John called them “injuns” and grandson Blaine recalls being sung the Indian song on more than one occasion, “one little, two little, three little Indians”...and you knew he had noticed. A favorite memory for granddaughter Amy was getting back to the house late for lunch one day with Grandpa, and having to make their own sandwiches. John made an onion sandwich with a big slice of onion and some salt on it. After he finished eating it, he went to find Nell and gave her a big onion kiss! Watermelon was a favorite of John’s. But he couldn’t eat it without spitting seeds at people and starting a seed war. John loved to name things. He gave everyone nicknames. The cats all had unusual names, such as Calhoun, Turbo, and others. John affectionately called his German made Mercedes cars, “Kraut cans”. He enjoyed visiting pawnshops and called it “slumming.” A used car or equipment lot was known as the “lemon orchard.” John was spontaneous. He might decide the family was going to the circus...in Bozeman, that day, or if he had some extra feed made up he might go and buy, say 1200 fryer chicks. As he would drive around his domain, John would often take “short cuts”. These short cuts were

often longer than the planned route. And invariably, he would call on his radio to report that he was stuck and needed help. Granddaughter Gina describes her grandfather as fair, responsible, hardworking and kindhearted. Janette remembers her father being gentle in his discipline. She was learning to drive and came into the farmyard, sidwiping another vehicle parked there. Sacred to death about what his reaction would be, John simply came into her room, rubbed her back, he gave great back rubs, and told her she needed driving lessons. He set up a driving course of tires in the yard for her to practice her driving skills. Daughter Jo says her father was a good man and it never entered his mind to do anything wrong. Juanita and others commented on how John had a special gift for making each person he was around feel special. With Rachel it was twirling her around and calling her his beautiful granddaughter at his 50th wedding anniversary party. Rachel felt people just enjoyed being around John and being included in what he was doing. For granddaughter Jenni, those short visits after dinner with Grandpa made her feel special. Daughter-in-law Connie admired his integrity. In his marriage, John was always devoted to Nell. He called her "his bride" and you didn't want to make the mistake of not respecting her. Granddaughter Gina noticed how late in life, John especially would light up when he was around Nell. While residing at The Veterans Home, Janette would get him to go to eat meals by telling him that Nell would be there; he was always ready to go then. When they were together these last years, John and Nell did not need to talk much, they seemed to communicate with their eyes and their hands. They were always holding hands. After 66 years of loving and living together, they still had a special light in their eyes for each other. For the grandchildren, John seemed larger than life. Jenni called him a superhero, or maybe "McGyver" who could fix anything; Amy referred to him as the man who "steered the ship"; Ross called him "Superman"; and Wes talks of how proud he was of his grandpa, a man who worked 12 hours a day, everyday, and never slowed down until he was 85 years old, and how his grandfather was a real hero who had "saved the world and fed the nation." They just don't make them like that

anymore. And they don't! John Kubesh was special! The significance of his life will live on for generations to come. He was greatly loved, respected and admired. He will be greatly missed.

Tribute Wall



“ *John E. Kubesh*

December 07, 2022 at 04:10 PM



“ *Barbara Kubesh lit a candle in memory of
John E. Kubesh*



barbara Kubesh - December 15, 2020 at 12:27 PM