



John "Sonny" Whiteman, Jr.

July 17, 1940 - May 24, 2013

Richey, Montana: John "Sonny" Whiteman, Jr., age 72, of Richey, passed away on Sunday, May 19, 2013 from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and Congestive Heart Failure at the Billings Clinic in Billings, Montana. Funeral Services will be held at 2:00 P.M. on Friday, May 24, 2013 at the Richey High School in Richey with Reverend Vicki Waddington officiating. Interment will follow in the Richey Cemetery. Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home of Richey has been entrusted with the arrangements. Sonny was born on July 17, 1940 to Harriett (Bren) and John Whiteman, Sr. in Glendive, Montana. Sonny graduated in 1958 from Richey High School. He was very athletic, but always liked to tell people that he was "not so good in the classroom." However, he did excel in mathematics and could add many figures in his head faster than using a calculator. The day after he graduated from high school, he left with a combine crew for Kansas and Texas. He was only seventeen years old, but was used to working hard and having many responsibilities. Sonny was a farmer/rancher at heart, and when he began running his farm, he loved seeding, harvest, and feeding his cows. He always made sure that every animal was well fed. Sonny loved tinkering with things and took pride in the fact that he could fix almost anything. In 1998, Sonny was elected the mayor of Richey and served the town until his death. In his final years, he did a lot of the work from his pick-up with his nebulizer in his mouth and his canine companion, Ruby, in the truck bed. He was very proud of all he helped accomplish for the town. When the volleyball season rolled around he could

always be found supporting his wife and the team from the stands. He would say, "I don't know anything about coaching volleyball," but like many things, he never missed an opportunity to offer his advice anyway. He was a loyal supporter of the Richey Royals and then the eventual Richey/Lambert Fusion in all sports. Sonny loved spending time fishing at the lake in Fort Peck, and treasured the opportunity to go salmon fishing with some friends in Wisconsin before his health severely limited his activity. He talked for months about that trip and the good times he had. Sonny had twenty-two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren who provided many laughs and some reprieve from his diminishing health. His grandchildren and step-grandchildren were his pride and joy, and he treated them all as his own. He is survived by his wife Tilda of twenty-seven years, three daughters, Camy (Shane) Lohse of Huachuca City, Arizona, Cindy (Bryce) Starkey of Rapid City, South Dakota and Kim (Cole) Hanks of Wolf Point, Montana; two step-daughters, Krista (Joe) Gaylord and Katie (Randall) Dunham all of Billings, one step-son, Michael (Beth) Conroy of Circle, Montana; mother and father-in-law, Dorothy and Dewey Matovich of Grass Range, Montana; two sisters, Marilyn Buechler and Jackie (Lynn) Waters all of Richey and was "Uncle Sonny" to four nieces and three nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents and brother-in-law, Ken Buechler. Remembrances and condolences may be shared with the family at: www.silvernale-silhafuneralhome.com.

Tribute Wall



“ *John "Sonny" Whiteman, Jr.*

December 07, 2022 at 04:10 PM