



## Jay Ronald Ruckdaschel

April 23, 1933 - June 9, 2024

Jay Ronald Ruckdaschel (April 23, 1933 - June 9, 2024)

A loving father, tender and kind, what beautiful memories you left behind.

--Anonymous

Jay Ronald Ruckdaschel, age 91, died peacefully at home in Hopkins, MN on June 9, 2024, surrounded by his three loving daughters.

Jay - beloved husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, brother, uncle, cousin, and friend - was a kind, loving man with a strong faith in God. Always one to smile, he loved to sing, play the harmonica and piano, and spread joy to all around him. An avid Twins fan, we remember fondly his text-by-text replay keeping family and friends informed.

Jay was born on April 23, 1933, in Sisseton, SD, the first of ten to Ralph Ruckdaschel and Violet (Johnston) Ruckdaschel. He grew up on a farm near Claire City, SD, and was active in basketball, football, and track in high school.

In 1951, Jay attended Huron College while working to pay for his room, board, and tuition. During his freshmen year, he played on the basketball team which advanced to the NAIA national tournament in Kansas City. In his sophomore year, he met the love of his life, Margaret Alice Klicker (better known as

"Tootie"). Their plans to marry were postponed when Jay was drafted into the Army and served during the Korean War from August 18, 1953 through May 17, 1955.

After Jay's return from Korea, he and Tootie married on June 5, 1955. Together they had three daughters: Karla, Kaye, and Kim.

Jay received his Bachelor's Degree from Huron College in 1957, a Master of Education Degree from South Dakota State University in 1960, and an Educational Specialist Degree from Mankato State University in 1977.

Jay and Tootie, both dedicated educators, lived in several towns in South Dakota and Minnesota throughout the years. After graduating from Huron College in 1957, Jay's first job was as coach and teacher in Bancroft, SD. In 1960, Jay and Tootie moved to Volga, SD where Jay was guidance counselor and principal, and from 1964 through 1974 was superintendent.

From 1974 to 1980, Jay was superintendent in Tyler, MN, and from 1980 to 1985 was superintendent in Winner, SD. Jay finished his career in Pierre, SD with the Associated School Board Association from 1985 to 1997, serving as Assistant Executive Director and Director of the SD Teacher Placement Center. Jay was honored to receive the South Dakota Bell Award for his outstanding service and dedication as an educator.

After retirement, Jay and Tootie moved to Huron, SD in 1999 and then Hopkins, MN in 2008, remaining active in the community and their church. They volunteered for many heartfelt causes including the South Dakota Retired School Personnel (Jay was past president), AARP Drivers Safety Program, Rotary Club, Reading Council, Lions Club, and Special Olympics. Jay and Tootie also spent much of their retirement years traveling and visiting family, including multiple bus tours and trips overseas to Germany, Mexico,

England, Portugal, and France. And Jay was a proud lifelong member of the VFW and American Legion.

Ever devoted to his "sweetheart" Tootie during their 63 years of marriage, Jay became an avid texter with family and friends after Tootie's death on February 13, 2019. He continued Tootie's tradition of sending birthday and holiday cards as well as giving "flying 20s" to his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Jay appreciated the simple things: food was always good, people were good, and God was his rock. He also cherished friendships, from his childhood friends to those he made in recent years. He treasured time with his Chapel View friends with whom he did fitness walking, played bingo and Wi-Fi bowling, and shared memories.

Jay is survived by his children Karla Hauk, Kaye (Todd) Eckstaine, and Kim (Kevin) Ruckdaschel-Haley; grandchildren Jeremy Hauk, Jesse Hauk, Kirsten Eckstaine, Jacob Eckstaine, Zachary Haley, Sophia Haley, and Harry Momoh; great grandchildren Maggie Hauk, Molly Hauk, Dominic Hernandez, Sauntee Hauk, Lainie Hauk and Sam Hauk; siblings Marlene Isensee, Luella (Louis) Bettermann, Donna Sherman, Earl Ruckdaschel, Betty (John) Maxe, Alvin (Susan) Ruckdaschel, and Alice (Dan) Conklin, and many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. Preceding Jay in death are his parents; wife, Margaret; infant daughter, Lonna; beloved grandson Joshua Hauk; and sisters Barbara Bollig and Lyla Harris.

Jay taught us how to live each day, enjoy life's simple pleasures, love each other, be humble, enjoy music, and be positive and kind. Until we meet again, Jay, we love you and you remain in our hearts.

A celebration of Jay's life will be held Saturday, August 3, at Gethsemane

Lutheran Church in Hopkins, MN, at 2 p.m., with a pre-service gathering starting at 1 p.m. In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Gethsemane Lutheran Church, the church Jay loved. All are welcome to wear Twins attire, if desired, in celebration of Jay's favorite team.

# Tribute Wall

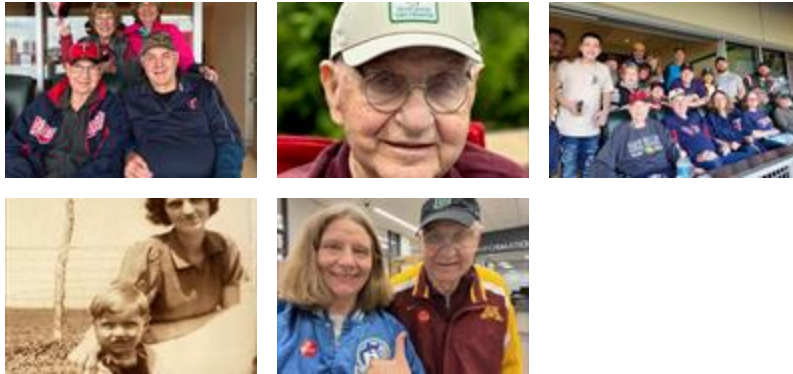
LB

“ I was saddened to learn of Jay’s passing. My immediate reflections were about his kindness & gentleness. He definitely cared for others; a fine gentleman. My condolences to his family & friends.

Loren Boyens - August 04, 2024 at 08:32 AM

KR

“ 12 files added to the album Jay Over the Years



Kim Ruckdaschel-Haley - June 19, 2024 at 06:19 PM

DN

“ Jay was always so happy and smiley, he reminded me of my Dad, George, Jays Uncle. a great cousin, Love to all, Deborah

Deborah Nelson - June 17, 2024 at 03:10 PM