



Merle "Butch" Richard Nordby

March 16, 1934 - October 12, 2024

Merle (Butch) Richard Nordby, age 90, passed away Saturday, Oct. 12th, 2024. Preceded in death by parents Lloyd Nordby and Mabel Larson Nordby and sister Loretta Carlson.

Butch was born and grew up in Odin, MN. When he was ten years old, his father broke his back and he had to start working on the family farm. He was involved in football and baseball, as well wrestling in the first exhibition wrestling match at St. James High school. He was a graduate of St. James High School, and at the age of 19 he volunteered for the draft where he served in the US Army for two years. In the army, he worked as a diesel mechanic. In 1956 he married Ruth Ann Klassen. He ran the farm and worked in a feed mill for fifteen years. In 1972, the family moved to St. James, selling the farm. He bought a clothing store in St. James called "The Clothes Shop" and purchased many different real estate properties to improve and resell. He also owned a drycleaning business called "Butch's Cleaners".

Butch played fast pitch softball well into his 40's and was destined to be inducted into the hall of fame in 2025. He was the main police commissioner for St. James for ten years and an artist for his son, Mark's, screening printing business as well as managed a pool hall for seven years. He and Ruth moved to Ramsey in the early 2000s to be near his daughter's family and to participate in activities with all the grandchildren in the metro area. They lived

in Savannah Oaks Senior Living complex where Butch was part-time caretaker until the age of 88. In 2022, Butch and Ruth moved into Beth and Kevin's home where they enjoyed retirement for two years.

In the late 60's, during the Jesus Revolution, Butch and Ruth had an encounter with God. They had accepted Christ as their personal savior through the Billy Graham Crusade ministries. Butch felt called by God shortly after to "Feed my Sheep", and not long after, many young people came to the farm to meet together, learn about the Bible, and worship God. Many of these young people accepted Christ and were healed of addictions, and going on to build families of their own. This ministry continued in St. James for 15 years. Butch and Ruth fellowshiped with several Christian groups, throughout the state and Florida. They continued to minister Jesus to every person who came their way, and were a rock to the extended family through life's trials and triumphs. They made Hope Fellowship of Ramsey their home church. Butch remained steadfast in learning about the Bible and studied various Christian and Jewish authors. In the early 70's a Lutheran pastor wrote a book about the amazing happenings at their farm called "Butch, this is your Life".

Survived by wife Ruth Ann, son Mark, daughter Beth, grandchildren, Beau, Landon, Tyler, Jake, Kole, and Kayla; great grandchildren Chelsea, London, Brody, Roan, Isla, and Logan.

His Celebration of Life is being held at Hope Fellowship of Ramsey, Oct. 18th, 2024. Visitation at 10:00, service at 11:00, and luncheon at 12:00.

Tribute Wall

DK

“ I have warm memories of all my days with Butch. He always had kindness to shed with whoever he met. He seem to respect everybody and it elevated them. I spent some early time with him helping him on the farm. I looked up to him as he was going to marry my sister. He raised pigs and one of the first jobs was to neuter the pigs, which was truly a wrestling match. He was powerful and held them down while I made the cuts. He would help my dad, Sam, in the lumberyard and drew small really good quality cartoons of dad that looked just like the Sarge in the Beetle Baily comic strip. He and dad always hit it off. He was a legendary softball player for Ormsby's long rival Odin, two very small bergs that were 3 miles apart. Hundreds of people would attend these night games, and he joined the Ormsby team one year when they went to the State meet.

Don Klassen - October 17, 2024 at 06:12 PM