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Chadrad Communications, Inc.
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07/01/2013 - James Thomas Beyer

Funeral Services for James Thomas Beyer will be Monday, July 1, 2013 at 10:00 AM at the Mare Barn at Ft. Robinson State Park with Reverend Matt Parker, Harrison Bible Church, officiating.

Burial will be at the Montrose Cemetery.

Jim was born on April 10, 1938, in St. Cloud, Minnesota, to Howard Liestman and Bernice (Kapolczynski) Liestman, and he passed away on June 27, 2013, at Chadron, NE. He was the second of four children and the only son. In 1942, following a house fire, he and his two younger sisters were adopted by Philip Beyer and Antionette (Dragoun) Beyer.

At the age of fourteen, he left home and worked as a ranch hand on various ranches before enlisting in the Air Force in 1956. He had hoped to be a bombardier, but due to a woman with a high-heeled shoe, he served as an airplane mechanic instead. Jim was honorably discharged in 1960.

Out of the military, Jim resumed his life as a ranch hand and worked for various cattle companies in Nevada, Montana, South Dakota and Nebraska including the Matador Cattle Company, Bob Morland, the Abbott Cattle Company, and the Coffee Ranch. While visiting friends in Wyoming, a feisty red-head caught his eye. Her beautiful red hair was billowing in the wind as she walked across a street, and Jim turned to his buddy and said, "I'm going to marry that girl!" And on July 30, 1976, at Winnemucca, NV, he married JoAnn Barrett. The union was blessed with four children: Daniel Zane, Joni Lynn, Debra Sue and Jacob David.

In 1977, Jim moved his family to Bingham, NE, and they spent several years ranching in the Nebraska sandhills. After the three eldest children left home, Jim and Jake moved to Crawford, NE. In the summer of 1997, Jim went to work at Ft. Robinson State Park as the Stage Coach Driver, and in 1998 began driving Fred and Barney on the hay wagon for the breakfast and dinner rides, as well as for the history tours around the Fort. This he did for fifteen years. In 2007, Badger became Jim's sidekick on the hay wagon, and the pair brought delight and smiles to many faces as they chauffeured tourists around the Fort. For many years, Jim also worked at the Crawford Livestock Market on sale days (Fridays), and at the time of his death was employed by the Livestock Market as well as Fort Robinson.

He had a genuine love of animals. For those who were fortunate enough to have known Liz or Badger, it was obvious that these loyal friends were more than just pets to Jim – they were family.

Immediate Survivors:

Children: Daniel Beyer of Winfield, KS; Joni (Justin) Anderson of Eagle Mountain, Utah; Debra Sue of Sidney, NE; and Jake (Courtney) Beyer of Wichita, KS; Seventeen grandchildren: Catlyn Beyer, Ryan Beyer, John Beyer, Caitlyn Anderson, Susan Anderson, Ashley Anderson, Jacob Anderson, Timothy Anderson, Talyah Huss, Kyrah Huss, Gavin Huss, Cydahlee Ryder, Romain Ryder, Devin Jordan, Angela Beyer, and James Beyer; Sisters: Geraldine, Darlene and Audrey; as well as nieces and nephews, and many, many friends he considered family.

He was preceded in death by his birth and adoptive parents.

Jim was a truly unique and special person who touched the lives of many. He left a positive impression and fond memories with everyone he met. He will be greatly missed!!

Memorials may be dropped off at Security First Bank-Crawford or sent to Chamberlain Chapel; P.O. Box 970; Chadron, NE 69337.

Online condolences can be made at www.chamberlainchapel.com

Chamberlain Chapel of Crawford is in charge of arrangements.

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