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10/06/2012 - Jake J. Brill

Memorial services for Jake J. Brill, a long time area businessman, age 84, of Chadron, will be Saturday, October 6, 2012 at 11:00 AM at Chamberlain Chapel in Chadron, NE with Pastor Ann Sundberg and Dr. Russ Seger officiating.

Inurnment will take place at a later date in Greenwood Cemetery.

Jake was born on December 23, 1927 in Minatare, NE to Jacob Brill Sr. and Maria Elizabeth (Fox) Brill and passed from this life on October 2, 2012 at Prairie Pines Lodge Assisted Living.

His parents, Jacob and Maria were born in New Norka, Russia, a colony of German settler that escaped from Germany during World War I. Jacob and two brother migrated from Russia to Winnipeg, Canada in March 1912.

Jacob and Maria had eight children, the oldest being born in Canada. They came to the United States and settled in the Minatare, NE are working in the sugar beet industry, later moving to Whitney, NE. They received their citizenship papers in 1939 and 1940.

Jake attended school in Whitney. As a young boy he helped his father on the farm and showed entrepreneurial traits way back then. A couple of his ventures were raising turkeys and trapping and selling pelts for extra money.

When just a teenager he secured a loan from the Bank of Chadron to purchase a few head of bum calves to raise and sell.

In 1945 he enlisted in the US Coast Guard, Merchant Marines. He was on the USS Warwick Victory Ship, deploying out of San Diego, San Francisco and Los Angeles in California. He served in the Pacific Theater of Operations in Japan and Hawaii. Jake as honorably discharged in March of 1946.

On July 20, 1946 Jake and Claudine Gusner were married in Rapid City, SD and shortly thereafter moved to Los Angeles area in CA. To this union were born their son, Eugene K. and daughter, Dorene Kay.

Jake attained a California real estate license and enjoyed a successful career as a realtor. In the early fifties, the family returned to Nebraska. Due to the declining health of Jake's father, they moved to Whitney where Jake took over his dad's farming operation.

Later, Jake opened a vehicle body repair shop in Crawford and also begin to sell used cars for Abe Chicoine in 1957, daily commuting from Whitney until they purchased a home in Crawford. In November 1960, he purchased Crawford Implement Company with Loy Pierce as partner in the business. This was a franchised dealership selling Case farm equipment, Buick cars and GMC trucks. They enjoyed an outstanding business for twenty-five plus years. In January of 1978 Jake established a used car dealership and an auto repair shop in Chadron. The building was heated and cooled by solar energy panels, thus he called his new business Solar Motors. After commuting from Crawford, Jake and Claudine eventually moved to Chadron and operated the business for years before selling the business and building to Brett Baker.

Throughout his life Jake continued to buy and develop property in the Dawes County area. He was a member of the BPOE Elks Club, the American Legion, as well as the Eagles Club in Crawford. He assisted with the PRCA Rodeos in Crawford. For many years you would find him at the entrance gate selling tickets to Crawford's Fourth of July Rodeo. Jake took great

joy in caring for and helping his neighbors and friends, most often from “behind the scenes.”

He always said that his hobby was work and he was “tired, but not retired.” Although he had no hobbies he had two passions he enjoyed to the fullest and they were listening to music and flying his private plane- his Mooney.

On many Sunday mornings he took off into the wild blue yonder where he said, “I could wash my mind of all my cares and frustrations, and up there was where I felt the closest to God.”

Jake deeply loved his granddaughters and great grandchildren. He took great interest in them and was very proud of their accomplishments. Their memories of their Grandpa Jake will always be special to them.

Jake was preceded in death by his parents, four sisters, Mary, Shirley, Dorothy and Martha, one brother, Leo Brill, his wife Claudine and his son Eugene.

He leaves to mourn his passing his beloved daughter Dorene and his son-in-law Don Christensen of St. George, UT; three granddaughters and their husband; Wendy Ostermeyer Koza and Russ of San Diego, CA; Taunya Ostermeyer Rapley and Chris of Kiowa, CO; Julie Brill Graham and Michael of Arvada, CO; great grandchildren, Alyssa and Reid Koza, Ryan Rapley and Kristen Graham, sister Betty Brill Sundin of Carson, CO; brother Bob Brill of Hastings, NE; cousin Jerry Brill of Colorado Springs, CO; cousin Mary Brill Jane Bleyle of Scottsbluff, NE; long-time friend and business partner, Loy Pierce of Crawford, NE and special long-time friend Denise James.

A memorial has been established for the Crawford or Chadron Fire and Rescue Departments or the Chadron Home Health and Hospice. Donations may be sent to Chamberlain Chapel, P.O. Box 970, Chadron, NE 69337.

Online condolences may be made at www.chamberlainchapel.com.

Chamberlain Chapel of Chadron is in charge of arrangements.