

## In Loving Memory

# Kermit Oris Bearstops

## Khuwá Aúpi "They are Pursing Him"

June 29, 1961

Red Scaffold, South Dakota

May 17, 2024

Denver, Colorado

### **WAKE SERVICE:**

7:00 p.m., Friday, June 14, 2024

Red Scaffold Gym ~ Red Scaffold, South Dakota

### **FUNERAL SERVICE:**

11:00 a.m., Saturday, June 15, 2024

Red Scaffold Gym ~ Red Scaffold, South Dakota

**OFFICIATING:** Fr. Francis Nwakile

### **CASKET BEARERS:**

JD Bear Stops, Tawn Bear Stops, Brady Bear Stops,  
Troy Sitting Crow, Marino Waloke, Isaiah Cochran,  
Willis Black Moon, James Pipe On Head [Wanbli Waci Hoksila],  
Wakinya Peta, and John Deignan

### **HONORARY CASKET BEARERS:**

Oscar Archambault, Scott Dupris, Charles White Eagle, Kevin  
Finley, Raylene Miner, Doyle Pipe On Head Family, Samuel, Daniel,  
and Maria Necklace and Family, Betsey and Dabian Spotted Wood  
and Family, and Barbara May and Family, Jacques Marcy and Sergio  
Betrand-Puig, Hal Robinson and Family, Chubbs White Mouse and  
Family, Sundance Sitting Crow and the Sitting Crow Family

**MUSIC:** All Musicians and Singers Welcome

### **SINGERS:**

Ree Red Horse, Austin Bissonnet, and Sophie Brings Plenty

**EULOGIST:** Anissa One Stroke

**TRADITIONAL SERVICES:** Vernel Sitting Crow

### **INTERMENT:**

Sacred Heart Catholic Cemetery ~ Red Scaffold, South Dakota

*Our Father* who art in Heaven  
Hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done,  
    On earth as it is in HEAVEN.  
Give us this day our daily bread. And  
*forgive* us our trespasses, as we forgive  
    those who trespass against us  
And lead us not into temptation  
    but deliver us from evil.  
  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the *Glory Forever.*

- Matthew 6:9-13

**Kermit Oris Bear Stops** was born on June 29, 1961, to Romanus Bear Stops and Catherine Lone Eagle, in Red Scaffold, SD, during a blizzard on the prairie.

Oris, as he liked to be called, spent his younger days chasing the summer sounds of yellow jackets and meadowlarks spinning and shooting over the clown flowers and grasses of the northern plains. Typical of that generation, his formative years were in nature's classroom; a combination of boisterous and wondrous discoveries on the family ranch outside of Red Scaffold, where the family Sundance is held.

Oris felt a strong kinship with his Sundance and his father and mother's love, as he journeyed through this life, sharing his humor and energy with them at every opportunity. Particularly close with his mother, Oris reminisced with stories of her and Circle Bear, the great Medicine Man, who was his stepfather. Oris' father, Romanus Bear Stops was a healer and medicine man, who solely helped the people with his sacred path. Furthermore, Oris came from a long line of Medicine Men and healers, where his uncle, Pete Bear Stops, and Oris kept his family close to his heart his entire life. A sun dancer himself, spirituality would come to play a pivotal role for Oris, as he followed the medicine line from Pete Bear Stops Senior and Three Stars, his ancestors. As he walked this earth, he would come in contact with many Lakota elders who would impart him with an abundance of wisdom and knowledge, much of which was from the distant past. In that regard, Oris became a living archive of songs as well as cultural and ceremonial protocol details which brought him closer to his Lakota tradition. A magnificent singer, Oris could inject an unparalleled vitality into ceremonial songs that left everyone inspired. The distinctive Lakota Style of the Red Scaffold drum groups he participated in, were demonstrated with gusto, and Oris and family went to PowWows and ceremonies to help sing and celebrate life and healing.

As a high school student Oris excelled in sports, as he was celebrated and awarded a prestigious honor as the year's MVP of his city of Eagle Butte. As a lifelong student, Oris was constantly taking classes, aspiring to eventually apply his collected knowledge into a formal degree. Although he never reached that particular finish line, his educational journey was very likely more valuable than the destination.

Oris always sought art and aesthetics in his life. He loved art and music, and he showed that love by learning how to paint and draw. He designed note cards and greeting cards with the passion and focus of a true artist. He would make small symbolic pipes and make sacred cards for funerals and birthdays. Whether his focus was given to art, song or participating in a good conversation, Oris found his own authentic ways to connect to his world.

Oris held his family in his heart at all times and called frequently when he was in the hospital. He loved to reminisce about old friends and family, and he would break out in song every once in a while, just to show us he could still carry a tune until the end. We made a ribbon shirt for Brother, and it has all of the beauty and flavor of his life and the Hocoka Luta he carried in his heart.

He is survived by daughter, Ashley Bear Stops; son, Brandon Bear Stops; brothers: James Bear Stops, Rodney Bad Hand, Doyle Pipe On Head, and John Deignan; sisters: Delores Duran, RomaLee Bear Stops, Erlene Rooks, Georgia Rooks; aunties: Geraldine Bear Stops, Norma Black Moon, and Marlene Bear Stops; and uncle, Morris Bear Stops.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Romanus Bear Stops and Catherine Lone Eagle; stepfather, Roy Circle Bear; daughter, Sophie Bear Stops; sisters, Kathleen Bear Stops, Gloria Sitting Crow, and Alvina Circle Bear; and brother, Elmer Bear Stops.

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