

Francis "JR" Schmidt, 83, of Faulkton, passed away Saturday, August 31, 2024, at Sanford USD Medical Center, Sioux Falls.

Francis "JR" Schmidt was born March 16, 1941, in Newton, Illinois, the son of Francis and Mildred (Ochs) Schmidt.

The Schmidt family grew up on a farm in central Illinois, realizing the necessity of hard work needed to maintain the crops and daily care of livestock. There was always time for a game of softball or card game at the end of most days. Being the oldest, everyone wanted JR for a partner or to be on his team.

After graduating from Newton High School in 1959, JR joined the U.S. Navy and served four years. He then moved back to Illinois and held various jobs, the last being with Central Illinois Pipeline. This line of work eventually took him to South Dakota, and it was there that he met his soulmate, Linda Lea. They married in October of 1988 and from that time on, Faulkton was his home.

The simplest pleasure in life brought much joy to JR and Linda, traveling south in the winter to Texas in their motor home after retirement, taking long drives in the country, or enjoying a cold beer at the local pub in Faulkton. JR also enjoyed deer and pheasant hunting.

JR was a friend to many. His wise cracks, teasing and sarcasm to those around him were all signs that he liked you. If you were his friend, you would be a friend forever, and he was always loyal and true. Despite his failing health in the last year, he never lost his sense of humor. Throughout his journey, he cracked jokes with the nurses, caregivers, and those around him. He had a great ability to make others smile and his sense of humor will be missed as stated in this quote from a comrade in Faulkton. "Being grumpy and well liked is hard to pull off."

A special thanks to Karen and Danny, Larry and Michelle, his caregivers at the Faulkton Area Medical Center, Avera Hospital and Sanford USD Medical Center, and the many wonderful friends in Faulkton for the love, care and concern shown to JR throughout his health issues.

JR is survived by his children: Kevin Schmidt of Wakonda, SD, Kenny (Michelle) Schmidt of Decatur, IL, Karen (Danny) Jackson of Pawnee, IL and Kyle (Monica) Schmidt of Ashland, IL; stepchildren: Bill (Brenda) Becker of Redfield, SD, Michelle (Larry) Thares of Faulkton, SD, Angie (Steven) Waiflein of Aberdeen, SD, Julie Becker of St. Louis, MO, Sherri Becker of Aberdeen, SD and Bob Becker of Hardin, MT; many grandchildren and great-grandchildren; siblings: Janet (Charles) Rudolphi of Centralia, IL, Barbara Martin of Mebane, NC, Celeste Webster of Springfield, IL, Marilyn (Lee) Bahney of Alamo, TX and Don (partner Zaida) Schmidt of Oblong, IL.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Linda Lea; parents; and Sandra (Brown) Schmidt, the mother of his four children.

Memorials in JR's honor may be directed to the Faulkton Area Medical Center Foundation, P.O. Box 100, Faulkton, SD 57438.

A graveside service will be at 4:00 p.m., Saturday, September 14, 2024, at the Faulkton Cemetery with full military honors. A celebration of life will follow burial at the Short Stop Bar, Hwy 212, Faulkton.

"May he rest in peace and continue to bring joy to those in his presence."

Luce Funeral Home of Faulkton has been entrusted with JR's arrangements. (www.familyfuneralhome.net)

He never said, *"I love you,"*

in words I can recall.

He felt it not the manly thing to do.

Yet, deep within my heart

I know that LOVE was really there.

His eyes, his touch, the things he did
all told me that it's true.

And now it's time to say, "Goodbye,"

to Father and to *friend*.

Sweet memories remain of him,
ones that will not end.

