





Joe Thiel, 87, of Miller, passed away peacefully Saturday, December 5, 2020 at his home.

Joe was born October 23, 1933, in Spencer, Nebraska to Henry and Esther (Velder) Thiel. He was reared on farms in the Nebraska/South Dakota vicinity before moving into Fairfax, SD where he helped his mother in her Main Street cafe. He graduated from Fairfax in 1951.

He entered the U.S. Army in 1954, serving two years in Baumholder, Germany being honorably discharged in April of 1956. Before joining the army, he was employed as a surveyor on the Ft. Randall Dam.

Joe joined his brother, Clarence, in the operation of "Thiel Body Shop" in Miller in 1956, later taking over full ownership in 1962, which he continued to operate for over 50 years. One of his greatest interests was repairing and restoring automobiles. (Least favorite was operating the wrecker service)

He married Judy Mae Kost on June 11, 1960 in Fairfax, South Dakota. To this union two daughters were born.

He took great pride in teaching all his grandsons to shoot pool. His love of playing pool led him to various towns around the state, culminating in winning the Class A state tournament in 1973, and playing Governor Richard Kneip. He was inducted into the So. Dak. VNEA Hall of Fame in 1991. Many lasting friendships were formed over time and remained in place until the end.

He was a member of the Miller Volunteer Fire Department for several years. He was also a talented horseshoe thrower, making "ringers" on a regular basis. Hunting and fishing with special friends were also high on his list of sporting activities.

His purchase of a 1958 Ford retractable car off the Ford dealership showroom floor in Miller became the basis of his passion for retractables. He purchased a 1959 at a national convention in Des Moines, IA. As retractables were manufactured for only three years ('57-'58-'59) his desire was to own one of each. This prompted his constructing a 1957 "from the ground up" - taking four years to finish and complete the "set". For years all three cars carried Miller and Faulkton High School Royalty in Homecoming parades, dignitaries in 4th of July parades, as well as, carrying many newlyweds down Main Street after their ceremony. He especially enjoyed driving in the Augustana College Viking Days Parade in Sioux Falls, SD while Staci was in attendance there.

Through Holli's job as a flight attendant, he and Judy Mae traveled many places, including Australia, England, Grand Cayman Island, and a Mexican cruise. Joe always enjoyed his time at the farm with Staci, Mike, and his grandsons.

Joe is survived by his wife of 60 years, Judy Mae of Miller; two daughters: Holli (Chip) Doss of Atlanta, GA and Staci (Mike) Aesoph of Orient, SD; five grandsons: Austin Auch (special friend, Misty Cook) of Phoenix, AZ, Andrew Aesoph (special friend, Leah Cotton) of Orient, SD, Joseph Aesoph (fiancée, Siara Binger) of Chamberlain, SD, Nathan (Bailey) Aesoph of Orient, SD, and Oliver Aesoph (special friend, Lexi Binger); two great grandsons: Preston Aesoph and Everett Aesoph; a great grandchild due in February; four nieces and three nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers; and three sisters.