



### **Prayer Service:**

7:00 p.m., Monday, September 16, 2024

First Presbyterian Church

Miller, South Dakota

### **Celebration of Life:**

10:30 a.m., Tuesday, September 17, 2024

First Presbyterian Church

Miller, South Dakota

### **Ministers:**

Pastor Robert Brooks

Pastor Glenn Stewart

### **Casketbearers:**

Monte Reichert - Corey Resel - Tyler Lacher

Andy Roeber - Andy Werdel - Rusty VanDerWerff

### **Musicians:**

SuAnne Meyer & Leo Jensen

### **Musical Selections:**

"The Old Rugged Cross"

"How Great Thou Art"

"Go Rest High on that Mountain"

### **Burial:**

G.A.R. Cemetery

Miller, South Dakota

**Following the burial, everyone is invited  
to join the family for lunch at the church.**

Arrangements Entrusted To  
Reck Funeral Home - Miller, S.D.  
[www.familyfuneralhome.net](http://www.familyfuneralhome.net)



Celebrating A Life

**Bob Tong**

July 7, 1941 - September 10, 2024



Bob Tong, 83, of Miller, passed away Tuesday, September 10, 2024, with his family at his side, at Avera McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls.

Charles Robert Tong was born July 7, 1941, in Sinking Springs, Ohio to the late Ira Robert and Mary Ellen (Jordan) Tong. Bob graduated not only with his high school diploma but also a machinist degree from Latham High School in Latham, OH in 1959. After graduating high school, Bob joined his father logging the hills of Ohio which then led to the start of his truck driving career with his Uncle Bill.

Construction work on the Big Bend Dam near Fort Thompson brought Bob to South Dakota in 1961. Bob always joked that he arrived in South Dakota with \$32.00 in his pocket and if he could ever gather \$32.00 again, he would head back home to Ohio!! Bob married Diana Huisman in Miller, SD on June 1, 1963. Two sons, Robert (Rob) and Jeffrey, were born into this union.

After becoming injured while working on the Big Bend Dam, he joined the workforce at Ree Implement in Ree Heights as a May Tag repair man. Bob and Diana started their farming career on a small scale with a few milk cows, selling cream. Bob's trucking career took off from here helping supplement the farm income.

Within this era, Bob, his father-in-law, Dean Huisman, Arnold Johnson, and Edwin Christopherson built their "Farmer" inspired dragster. Powered with the motor from Bob's '58 Chevy, which he purchased with his Ohio drag racing earnings, the team built the dragster using old combine parts and any scrap iron and treasures that were to be found in tree belts and iron piles.

Success from the dragster shifted to more dirt track racing. Bob's deep desire for speed and love of racing dirt tracks brought him to the Miller Speedway serving as the local track lineup man. His presence on and around the track led to the opportunity to drive a racecar for the Muth Family, for which he was always grateful. While driving Muth's car, the Carlson family asked Bob to also race their modified. The opportunity arose to purchase Red Hartford's #20 Chevelle, with the Mentzer Boys. Piloting three cars a night developed a competitive rivalry between himself and the neighboring Yost boys. This combative friendship and constant bantering prompted vibrant stories to be told which led to BIGGER AND BETTER STORIES. Dale Johnson's expertise and hard work brought out Bob's hidden talent. Their success with #20 provided many fond memories for Bob. He always joked that after winning High Point Car on 3 tracks they still managed to lose \$3,000.00 that season!! Racing the #20 officially ended at the 1974 South Dakota State Fair when the race car went up in flames in the pits during a driver meeting.

Bob and Diana's passion with horses evolved into production sales and partaking in area Play Days. The dedicated involvement with the Rough Riders Club transitioned into competing and showing family raised Appaloosa's, Paint, and Quarter Horses. Relationships along this trail nurtured many lifelong friendships that are still cultivated to date.

His gift for visiting and telling stories brought him significant popularity announcing everything from horse pulls to sheepdog trials with one snow queen contest in the midst. Bob's love for coon hunting in Ohio blossomed into his following of pheasant hunters that traveled across the country every fall to enjoy a lot of Bob Tong's Stories and a bit of South Dakota pheasant hunting. As years have passed, the hunters have become part of our family.

Bob was truly blessed to have followed his passions of scuba diving, trucking, racing, and raising both cattle and horses all while farming and ranching with his family right up to his very last days.

Bob is survived by his wife, Diana of 61 years; his son, Jeff (Michelle) Tong, all of rural Miller, SD; and all of the rest of you.

Preceded in death by his son, Rob; his parents, Bob and Mary Ellen Tong; brother, Steve; and his two sisters, Barbara (Susie) Hammond and Malita Tong.

