Close The Gate

For this one farmer the worries are over,
lie down and rest your head,
Your time has been and struggles enough,
put the tractor in the shed.
Years were not easy, many downright hard,
but your faith in God transcended,
Put away your tools and sleep in peace.
The fences have all been mended.
You raised a fine family, worked the
land well and always followed the Son,
Hang up your shovel inside of the barn;
your work here on earth is done.
A faith few possess led your journey through life,
often a jagged and stony way,
The sun is setting, the cattle are all bedded,
and here now is the end of your day.
Your love of God's soil has passed on to your kin;
the stories flow like fine wine,
Wash off your work boots in the puddle left
by blessed rain one final time.
You always believed that the good Lord
would provide and He always had somehow,
Take off your gloves and put them down,
no more sweat and worry for you now.
Your labor is done, your home now is heaven;
no more must you wait,
Your legacy lives on, your love of the land,
and we will close the gate.

Funeral Mass:
10:30 a.m., Friday, May 2, 2025
St. Mary's Catholic Church
Highmore, South Dakota

Celebrant: Monsignor Charles Mangan

Casketbearers:
Scott Nielsen - Brian Nielsen - Duane Nielsen
Cole Hamlin - Westen Hamlin - Evan Nielsen

Placing of the Pall:
Duane Nielsen - Brian Nielsen - Scott Nielsen
Tina Hamlin - Elaina Nielsen - Beth Nielsen

Reader: Shirley Klebsch

Giftbearers: Amy Nielsen & Brandi Hamlin

Organist: Bridget Zilverberg

Congregational Hymns:
"How Great Thou Art"
"Gift of Finest Wheat"
"On Eagle's Wings"
"Song of Farewell"
"I Am The Bread of Life"

Burial with Military Honors:
St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery
Highmore, South Dakota

Following the burial, the family warmly invites you to join them for lunch and continued fellowship at the church hall.

Arrangements Entrusted To
Luze Funeral Home - Highmore, South Dakota
www.familyfuneralhome.net

Remembering
THE LIFE OF
Robert L. Nielsen
December 18, 1933 - April 24, 2025

Robert L. Nielsen, 91, of Spearfish and formerly of Highmore, passed away Thursday, April 24, 2025, at Fort Meade VA Medical Center in Sturgis.

Robert (Bob) Lester Nielsen was born December 18, 1933, in Redfield, SD, to Arthur and Florence (McGinnis) Nielsen, twenty minutes after his twin brother Rolland. The boys, along with their older sister Arlene and younger sister Joann, grew up near Rockham, SD.

He began his education in a one room schoolhouse which was a mile and a half from their home at Rockham. In 1942, the family moved to a dairy farm in Wisconsin, living a few miles from his uncle's farm. After a few years they moved back to Rockham where Robert graduated from Miller High School in 1952.

Robert enjoyed raising livestock and doing chores with his siblings from an early age. Upon Robert's parents divorcing when he was thirteen, he decided to stay with his father on the farm while his siblings left for California with their mother. It was a difficult time, but they continued their work on the farm.

At the age of 20, Robert bought his first land in Hyde County. Shortly after this, he was drafted into the Army as a Medic. He served his country from 1957 to 1959. After being honorably discharged, he returned to Hyde County to manage the farm. Robert was recognized for his years of service at the annual Veterans Day Program by receiving a quilt made by the Highmore Harrold Quilters Group.

On May 10, 1960, he married his wife Rose Marie (Helsper), and their marriage was blessed with five children: David, Scott, Tina, Brian, and Duane. Together, they instilled a very strong work ethic in their children while working together on the family farm. Many days were spent together tending to the livestock, putting up hay in the field, and working in the garden. A big highlight for the family was going to the State Fair in Huron each summer, where the children showed 4-H exhibits and livestock.

The love of Robert's life, his wife Rose Marie, passed away due to cancer in 1990. This loss left a void in his life and heart that would never be filled again. At the same time, his youngest son, Duane, had childhood Leukemia. Through this difficult time, Robert continued working his ranch and raising Duane.

In 2002, he sold off his cows and started leasing his land.

During the years when Robert would take Rose and Duane to Sioux Falls for cancer treatments, they would see the McCrossan Boys Ranch from the interstate. He was curious about what they did there and eventually contacted them and learned about their dedication to boys living in conflict. It struck a chord with him as he recognized that he could have been one of those boys in his youth. This sparked his interest in making a contribution to the McCrossan Boys Ranch, which led to the Robert L. Nielsen McCrossan Visitor Center.

In recalling his trips for cancer treatments, Robert wanted to help people receive treatments closer to home. He knew a little bit about the Helmsley Center in Pierre, SD, and reached out for information on this facility. Upon learning about what they do, he decided to make a gift to remodel a suite and expand services to include an MRI scanner in memory of his late wife, Rose.

In his later years, Robert enjoyed driving in the pastures, sitting in the sun on the deck, and spending time in Spearfish, SD, with his son, Scott, and his family.

Robert is survived by his children: Scott (Beth) Nielsen of Spearfish; Tina (Mark) Hamlin of Highmore; Brian (Amy) Nielsen of Oacoma; and Duane Nielsen of Highmore; his five grandchildren: Brandi (Gary), Cole (Stacey) and Weston Hamlin; Elaina and Evan Nielsen: two step-grandchildren: Caleb and Brennan Schuette; two great-grandchildren: Milo and Cass Hamlin; sister Arlene Nielsen; brother-in-law Jim (Trena) Helsper; sister-in-law Kathleen Kallenberger; brother-in-law Michael (Carol) Helsper and various cousins.

He was preceded in death by his wife, a son, parents, parents-in-law, two siblings: Rolland Nielsen and Joann Inks; and sister-in-law, Ella Vee.

The family requests that instead of memorials, you make a donation to a charity of your choice.