



Donald R. Benson

December 28, 2015

Funeral services for Don Benson, 86, of Jefferson will be held at 10:00am Saturday, January 2, 2016 at The Dwelling Place, 303 East Gallup Road, Jefferson, Iowa. Interment will be in the Jefferson Cemetery. The family will visit with friends from 5:00 – 7:00pm Friday, January 1, 2016 at Slininger-Schroeder Funeral Home in Jefferson. Memorials are suggested to The Dwelling Place in Jefferson, IA or New Hope in Carroll, IA.

Donald Ralph Benson, 86, of Jefferson, died December 28, 2015 at the Greene County Medical Center in Jefferson, Iowa. He was born on May 5, 1929 to Ralph and Helen (Custer) Benson in Ames, Iowa. He grew up on the family farm near Jefferson, where he attended school and graduated in 1947.

He met Kathleen Joan Dool while in school at Iowa State University in Ames and they were united in marriage on November 22, 1950. Don was farming the family farm where he grew up and that's where they started their married life. They were blessed with five children: David, William, Richard, Teresa and Michael.

Don had a dairy operation until 1965, and continued to have a diversified farming operation with hogs and cattle over the years. In 1957 he was presented the Outstanding Young Farmer Award by the Jefferson Jaycees. He served in the Iowa National Guard, served on both the Greene County Fair Board and the Jefferson Community School Board and was a 29 year Rotary Club member. Don's great grandfather was one of the first settlers in Greene County and Don was able to accept a Heritage Farm award for the home farm at the Iowa State Fair in 2009. Over the years Don always liked to keep on the cutting edge of agriculture.

Don was an entrepreneur. He was always looking for new challenges. Don and Kathy met while roller skating before they started dating, so building a skating rink in Jefferson was a dream of theirs. Maranatha Skateland was a place that the youth of the community could spend their weekends, and Don and Kathy enjoyed their time operating it, as well as the second one they built in Carroll. Even in his later years he met many people who "grew up" in the skating rinks and even took their own children there.

Don and Kathy celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on November 22nd. Kathy was the love of his life, and they were very seldom apart. Their years together were always full

of adventure, on the farm and on the many family vacations and all the traveling they have done in their retirement years. He looked forward every summer to family vacation trips to lakes in Wisconsin and Iowa as well as camping trips to Colorado. Don loved to drive the boat while the kids waterskied, and we have pictures proving that he once skied himself with his hat on. Their most memorable trip he and Kathy made in later years was a two month trip to Alaska in their motor home.

Serving the Lord was very important to both Don and Kathy. They have been active in their church all their lives. Don was a leader in the local Full Gospel Businessmen chapter in Jefferson. He also helped to bring Billy Graham evangelistic films to the community. A men's bible study was held in the Benson basement for many years until Don's health began to fail. He has ministered over the years to many young men and helped guide them in their faith and has built many lasting friendships.

Family was Don's most important legacy. He is survived by his wife, Kathy; a sister-in-law Virginia Downs; his children, Dave (Karen) Benson of West Lafayette, IN; Bill (Molly) Benson of Carroll, Iowa; Dick (Denise) Benson of Tulsa, OK; Teri (Paul) Johnson of Deep River, IA; and Mike (Kris) Benson of Jefferson; his grandchildren Noah Benson, Kyle (Erick) Morales, Samantha (Greg) Pauley, Janelle (Justin) Kaiser, Bob Benson, Elizabeth Benson, Jon Benson, Dan Benson, Matthew (Allison) Benson, Andrew Benson, Jenny (Trung) Tran, Ben Altes, Katey Johnson, Steven Johnson, Justin Benson, Nick Benson and Joe Benson; eight great grandchildren, and many, many friends.