

Dick was born in Letcher, South Dakota, on May 21, 1930. He was the fourth child of five children born to Charles and Bernadine (Dunbar) Thomas. Dick grew up in Letcher with siblings Lorraine, Vernon, Eugene and Charyl. He attended school and graduated from Letcher High School in 1948. After graduation, he was employed as a salesclerk at JCPenney in Mitchell, where he learned to tailor clothing.

Dick was drafted and served our country in the US Army from January 1952 until 1954. During the Korean War he was stationed in Tokyo, Japan, where his duties included putting together military correspondence and managing top secret files. He was honorably discharged from active duty to the Army Reserves in 1954 and discharged from the Army Reserves in 1960.

He returned to Letcher and resumed his work at JCPenney. He left JCPenney to manage the Corner Gas Station and Café in Letcher for a year until friends encouraged him to move to Rapid City. He was employed by Safeway and worked at many of their locations.

In 1961 at a New Year's Eve party hosted by friends, Dick met Jean Marie Jochim and they began their courtship. They enjoyed dancing and spending time with friends. Dick proposed to Jean on Valentine's Day, and they were married at St John's Catholic Church in Rapid City on July 7, 1962. They made their home in Rapid City and they were blessed with four children: John, Carol, Michele and Laura.

Dick was promoted and transferred with Safeway as assistant manager to the store in Belle Fourche, SD. During the summer of 1965, Dick transferred back to Rapid City with Safeway. After returning to Rapid City, Dick also worked part time at K-Mart Foods. In 1965 he began employment through Civil Service at Ellsworth AFB. While working at the Commissary, he held many positions and was promoted to the Warehouse Supervisor. Dick retired after 32 years of Civil Service at the Commissary.

Dick's hobbies included cooking, gardening, canning, sewing and wood working. He took pride in his manicured yard and rose gardens. Dick was an outstanding cook and was considered the chef in the family, making most meals from scratch. In the early 70's the family built a cabin at Angostura and weekends were enjoyed there during the summer months. Some of the activities he enjoyed were boating, water skiing, building sandcastles with his children and grandchildren, watching sailboats, playing cribbage and cards, and listening to country music. After a day at the lake, he enjoyed watching the sunsets from the deck of the cabin.

Dick felt that his greatest accomplishment in life was his family and nurturing the relationships that he had with others. He had a unique ability to see everyone as an individual and made each person feel loved in a special way.

One of Dick's requests was to be able to remain at home until his death. With the help of his family, Interim Health Care, Monument Home Health and Hospice, he was well cared for at home until he passed on October 11, 2022.

Left to treasure his memories are his wife, Jean of 60 years; daughters: Carol Hansen, Summerset, SD; Michele (Kevin) Anderson, Scranton, ND; and Laura (Mike) Benson of Summerset, SD; (9) grandchildren: Amber Thomas, Weston Thomas, Katelyn Hansen, Jacob Hansen, Courtney (Andrew) Bagley, Ryan Anderson, Caleb Benson, Reilly Benson and Emma Benson; (2) great granddaughters, Layla Anderson and Lynnlee Anderson.

Welcoming Dick to heaven is his son, John; his parents, Charles and Bernadine Thomas, his sister, Lorraine (Levo) Larson; his brother, Vernon (Joyce) Thomas, Eugene Thomas, and sister Charyl Saunier.



A Celebration of Life

RICHARD "DICK" THOMAS
May 21, 1930 ~ Oct 11, 2022

When I go
don't learn to live without me, just learn to live
with my love in a different way.
And if you need to see me,
close your eyes or look in your shadow when the sun shines.
I'm there.
Sit with me in the quiet
and you will know that I did not leave.
There is no leaving
when a soul is blended with another.
When I go
don't learn to live without me, just learn to look
for me in the moments.
I will be there.

~ Donna Ashworth



Order of Service

Welcome & Introduction
Jim Larson

Eulogy / Life Tribute
Michele Anderson

Informal Tributes
Family & Friends

Train of Life Poem
Carol Hansen and Laura Benson

Closing Music
I Can Only Imagine by Mercy Me

Burial
with Military Honors at
Black Hills National Cemetery
12:00 - 12:30 pm

Open House
at Dick & Jean's Home
6968 Emerald Heights Road
Summerset
2:00 pm ~ 4:00 pm