

In Loving Memory Of
Steven J. Ahrendt



Funeral Service
Thursday, August 6, 2026 - 10:30 AM
The Reformed Church - Dell Rapids, South Dakota

Officiating - Rev. Brogan Mohlenkamp

Scripture - 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Pianist - Lynn Kerns

Congregational Hymn
"On Eagles Wings" - INSERT

Recorded Music - As Recorded by Alan Jackson
"In the Garden" "How Great Thou Art"

Casket Bearers
Cody Benson Dallas Bullerman Marty Weiss
Jeremy Van Ede Taylor Shellum

Honorary Casket Bearers
Keith Matthiesen Mike Perrizo Terry Skyberg
Earl VandenBussche Dick Sexton Stuart Megard
Scott Walter Roger Madetzke Rodger Korthals

Military Honors
American Legion Post 65
Dell Rapids, South Dakota

Following the service, friends are invited to join the family for food and fellowship. We will then travel to Jasper City Cemetery for the committal service.

Interment
Jasper City Cemetery - Jasper, Minnesota

Arrangements under the care of
HARTQUIST FUNERAL HOME

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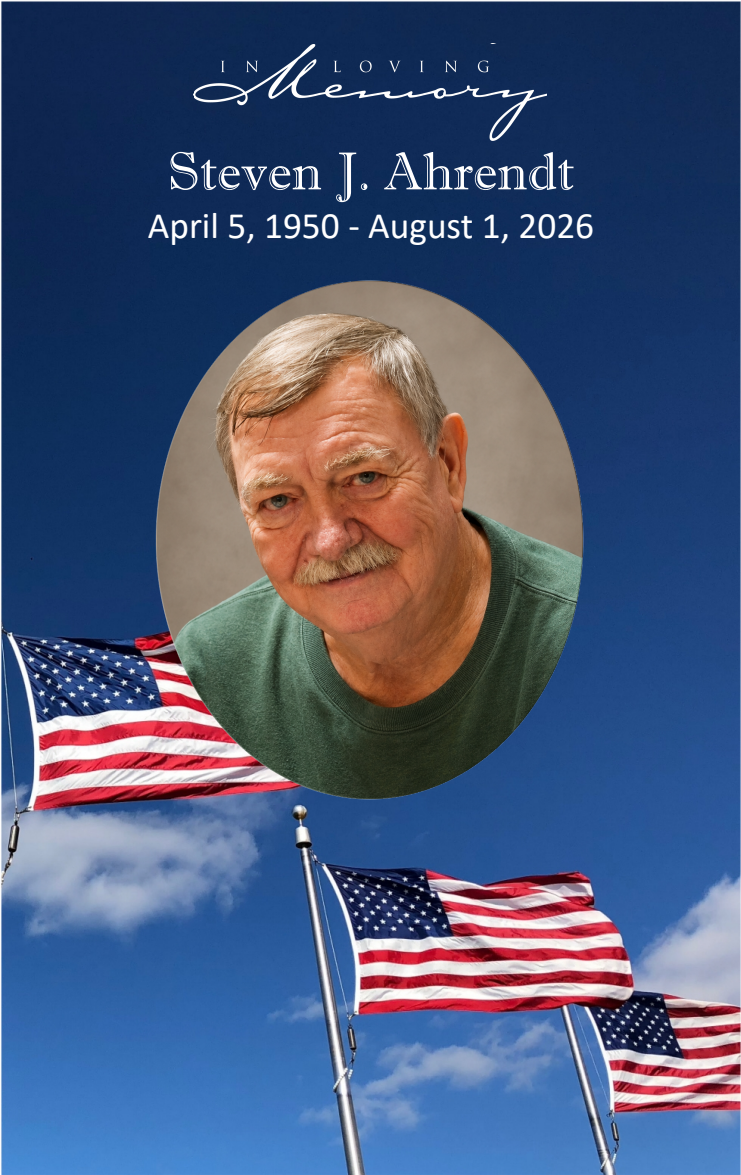
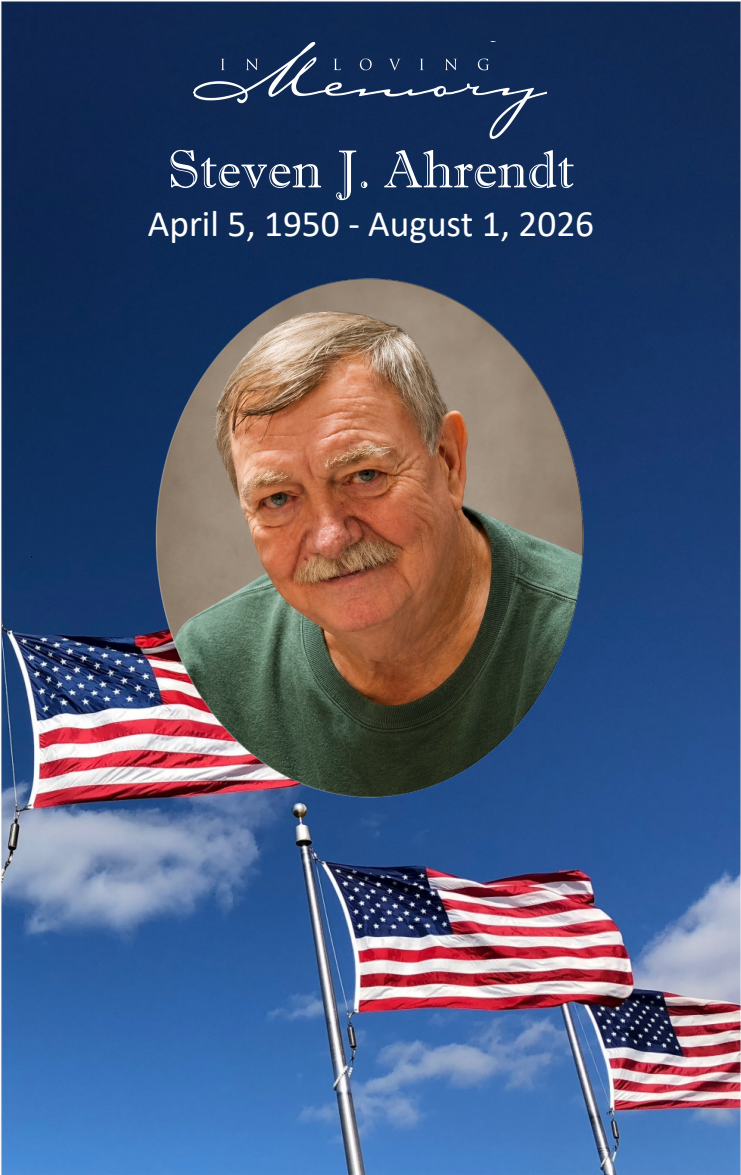
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Steven John Ahrendt, 76, of Dell Rapids, South Dakota, passed away suddenly on August 1, 2026, at Sanford USD Medical Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, following a several-month battle with health issues.

Steve was born on April 5, 1950, to Dwayne "Dud" Ahrendt and Mildred Kampa Ahrendt. He was born and raised in Jasper, Minnesota, growing up above his parents' restaurant, DJ's Café, which they owned and operated for 25 years. He graduated from Jasper High School in 1968.

In 1969, Steve joined the United States Army. He completed basic training at Fort Lewis, Washington, followed by advanced training at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland. On August 19, 1969, he arrived in Vietnam, where he served as a helicopter armament specialist and door gunner. In October 1970, he was sent to Germany, where he spent the following year before receiving his discharge.

Never one to take the ordinary path, Steve spent the year following his military service hitchhiking throughout Europe. He traveled through nearly every country from North Africa to Norway and even spent 10 weeks behind the Iron Curtain. Eventually, he made his way home aboard the QE2 (the Queen Elizabeth 2), and then rode a Greyhound bus from New York City back to Jasper, Minnesota.

Upon returning home, Steve began a 37-year career with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), working as a journeyman electrician and electrical contractor. He retired in 2009.

Steve married Jean Claassen on August 15, 1981. They made their home in Dell Rapids and were blessed with three children, Amber, Audrey, and Andrew. They later divorced in 1998. Steve devoted himself to raising his children and remained deeply involved in their lives.

In 2012, Steve began a relationship with Ravae Benson. Together, they shared years of companionship, laughter, travel, and adventure. Among their many memories was a 30-day road trip to Alaska and the Arctic Ocean and back. Their life together gave Steve many happy memories and a treasured companion in his later years.

Although Steve lived a life full of adventure, travel, service, and hard work, his greatest passion was always his family. His children and grandchildren were the center of his world. He deeply cherished his six grandchildren-Stella, Raegan, Reese, Ryder, Brooks, and Presley-whom he lovingly called his "Wolfpack." He rarely missed an opportunity to attend their sporting events, activities, and milestones, and he loved watching them grow into the people they are today.

Steve had a special way of making the youngest members of his family feel loved. His grandchildren, great-nieces, and great-nephews could always count on finding a sucker in Papa Steve's pocket. It was a small gesture, but one that perfectly reflected the kind of grandfather and uncle he was-always thinking of the kids and always ready to make them smile.

Steve was the kind of person people could count on. He was generous with his time, willing to help anyone who needed him, and fiercely devoted to the people he loved. His stories, adventures, humor, and unmistakable presence will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

Left to cherish his memory are his three children, Amber (Dave), Audrey (Jeff), and Andrew (Emily), all of Dell Rapids, SD; his six grandchildren, Stella, Raegan, Reese, Ryder, Brooks, and Presley; his brother, Danny Ahrendt of Trent, SD; his sister, Toni Bullerman of Adrian, MN; Ravae Benson; and his many nieces, nephews, extended family members, and friends.

Steve was preceded in death by his parents, Dwayne "Dud" Ahrendt and Mildred Ahrendt; his nephew, David Ahrendt; sister-in-law, Pam Ahrendt; brother-in-law, Mike Bullerman; his best friend, Kevin Benson; and many other close friends.

Day is done,
gone the sun,
From the hills, from the lake,
From the sky.
All is well,
safely rest,
GOD is nigh.

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