



**“Just because you come to school with manure on your boots
is no sign you’re a cowboy.” ~ Mr. Leonard DeBoer, 1956**

John’s teacher and his favorite quote

Funeral Service:
10:30 a.m., Monday, January 6, 2025
United Church of Christ
Chamberlain SD

Officiant: Pastor Jim Oleson
MaKaela Randall

Casketbearers:
Piper, Chance, Chisum, and Cyrus Blum;
Hayden, Philip, and Stuart Bentz; Leo, Ike, and Abe Mosterd

Honorary Casketbearers:
John's nieces, nephews, beloved Mueller and Bartine family,
and his many friends

Organist: Donna Knippling

Soloist: Travis Vaad

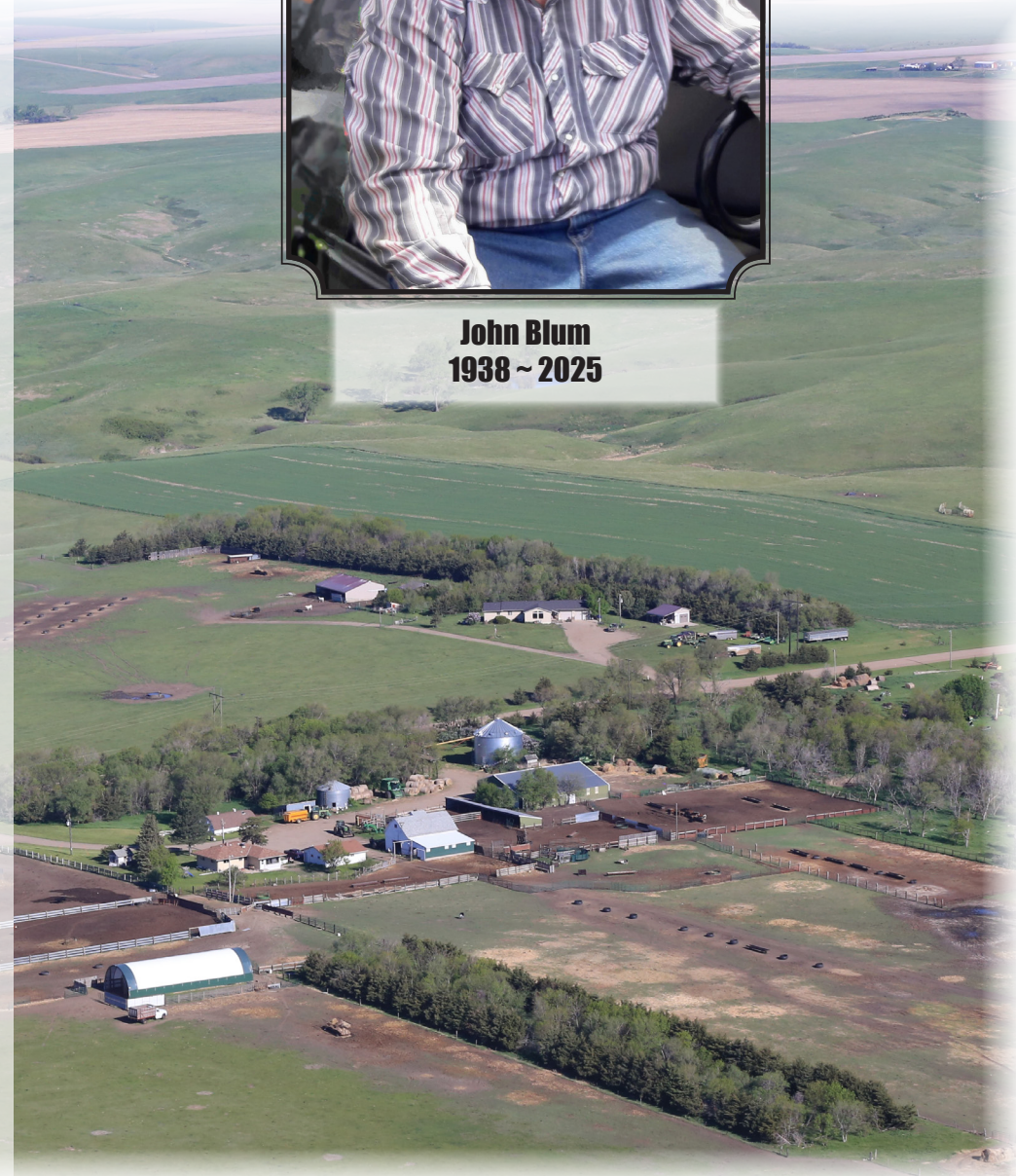
Musical Selections:
"That's My Dad" written by Travis Vaad
"Old Rugged Cross"

Burial:
Graceland Cemetery, Oacoma, SD

Arrangements entrusted to: Hickey Funeral Home, Chamberlain, SD



**John Blum
1938 ~ 2025**



Born on March 6, 1938 to Erwin & Louise (Bartine), John Blum died as peacefully on January 2, 2025 as he lived each of his 86 years.

John lived privately, with little regard for public accolades. He listened more than he spoke, which meant that when he spoke, everyone listened. John's priorities were his family and the ranch. He knew what mattered to him, possessed deep faith, and wanted for nothing more.

If his story ended here, John wouldn't have been disappointed, but as inventor of the pooka stick and man named "Champion Bridge Crosser," he deserves the rest!

As children, siblings Marlene, Bart, and John knew little about the difficulties of raising a ranch family in the 30s and 40s. John's days were filled practicing his aim with his trusty .410, working the ranch with his family, and riding his pony. Bart fondly recalls John becoming an impressive sportsman, the kind every hunting group wanted in theirs, and a dang good horseman besides.

Erwin died four days before John's 17th birthday, and the tragic loss made the close family only more so. Louise and the kids moved to town, and John vowed to own a ranch again. He spent every day thereafter working toward that goal.

After graduating from Chamberlain High School in 1956, John attended South Dakota State. A few weeks into his first semester, he was suiting up for a college football game and realized none of it was really for him. He left college, hit the workforce, and joined the South Dakota National Guard, proudly serving until his honorable discharge on April 4, 1966.

John took pride in every job he held on his way to becoming a ranch owner. Still, he spoke most fondly of his time being mentored as a meat cutter by his Uncle Albert Mueller and learning the art of business from his cousin Al at Al's Oasis.



Through those years, John and brother Bart ran cattle together on rented ground and worked for others. John said his proudest day before marrying Ruth, of course, was March 6, 1962—the day the brothers trailed their herd to what is now known as ranch headquarters. John took great pride in the ranch he, Bart, and Jay built with their wives over the past 62 years.

John's passion for education deepened in adulthood. He was an avid reader and self-taught investor. His belief in education and reputation for fairness led him to serve as an elected Chamberlain Board of Education

member from 1976 to 1991. The same beliefs inspired daughters Holly and Joan to become teachers and led John to serve many other organizations.

John married Ruth Dorwart on July 12, 1969. Together, they built a home and a

ranch where they raised their three children. No challenge in their nearly 56 years of marriage was greater than John's dementia diagnosis in 2020, but their love never wavered. John was a caretaker and provider in all the best senses, and Ruth faithfully returned the blessing by gracefully caring for John at home until his passing.

Just as Erwin was a hero to his children, John hung the stars for his kids. Daughters Joan and Holly knew he would embarrass them with his teasing, but they never doubted John's love. He welcomed their friends, judged countless Barbie beauty pageants, taught them his love for sports, and encouraged them to work hard. Their husbands became immediate family, and their children were adored. Grandpa John enjoyed every baseball and football game he could attend and thoroughly enjoyed telling people about his brilliant, musically talented grandsons.

John and his son Jay shared a bond known exclusively by a father and only son. Jay was his father's shadow, and when he chose to return to the ranch after college, John beamed with pride. They worked side-by-side with Bart for over 20 years before John turned over the reins due to declining health. John was a doting grandfather to Jay & Amy's four kids and took great care to teach them respect for land, livestock, and people alike. Time with Grandpa John in a tractor, on a four-wheeler, reading the paper, watching the markets, and enjoying root beer floats was always special.

Left carrying John's legacy are his beloved wife Ruth, son Jay (Amy) and their children Piper, Chance, Chisum, and Cyrus, all at home on the ranch; daughters Joan (Ted Bentz) and their children Hayden, Philip, and Stuart of Rapid City and Holly (Jason Mosterd) and their children Leo, Ike, and Abe of Burke; brother Bart (Patricia) at home on the ranch; brother-in-law Larry (Dorothy) Dorwart of rural Kimball; sister-in-law Karol Jo (Dorwart) Hendrickson; many special nieces and nephews, and a host of beloved Bartine and Mueller family members.

Preceding John in death were his parents, sister Marlene and her husband Ivan Olivier, brother-in-law Dr. Lee Dorwart, DVM, and nephew Eric Dorwart.

