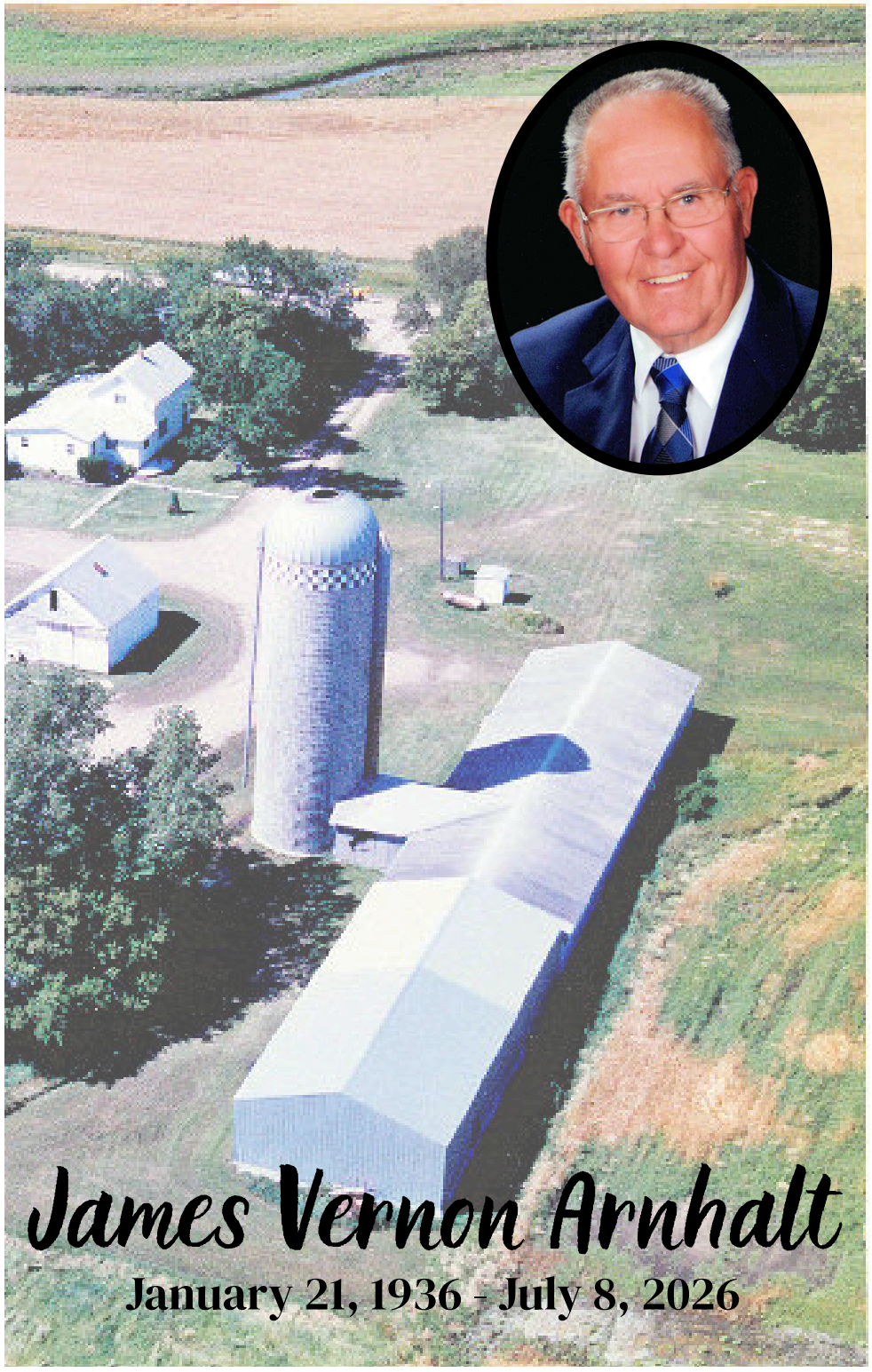




James Vernon Arnhalt

January 21, 1936 - July 8, 2026

James Vernon Arnhalt, lovingly known as Jim, was born on January 21, 1936, in Breckenridge, Minnesota, to Leo and Agnes (Abel) Arnhalt. He lived a life defined by unwavering faith, devotion to family, a strong work ethic, and a deep love for the land.

Jim spent his early years in Kent, Minnesota, where he attended country school until the age of 12. He then attended St. Mary's Catholic School for one year before moving with his family to Campbell, Minnesota, in 1948. Jim graduated from Campbell High School in 1954, beginning a lifetime of service, commitment, and hard work.

In September of 1955, Jim was drafted into the United States Army. He completed basic training at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas, and continued his military training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Shortly thereafter, he embarked on a ship carrying more than 3,000 soldiers bound for Germany. Jim was stationed in Darmstadt, Germany, where he served honorably in artillery communications. His military service was a point of pride and reflected the dedication and sense of duty that would characterize the rest of his life.

Upon returning home, Jim resumed farming alongside his father until gradually taking over the family operation in 1959. That same year, on May 11, he married the love of his life, Ardis Keller. Together they built a beautiful life centered on faith, family, and farming. Blessed with eight children — six daughters and two sons — Jim and Ardis created a home where hard work, laughter, love, and shared responsibility flourished. Their dairy farm was not only their livelihood but also the heart of family life, where countless lessons were learned and memories were made.

Jim milked cows until 1995 and continued farming for several years thereafter. Retirement never truly suited him. Even after officially "retiring," he remained happiest when he was working. He helped neighboring farmers, worked winter months in maintenance at Golden Living Center in St. Louis Park, Minnesota, assisted his son Randy in managing a dairy farm near New Munich, Minnesota, and spent three years working alongside Ardis at the Minnesota State Fair. There, Jim served as dairy supervisor in the milking parlor, a role he enjoyed immensely. He continued helping with farm work well into 2023. To Jim, work was never a burden — it was a source of purpose, satisfaction, and relaxation.

Though he was known for his tireless work ethic, Jim was equally known for his playful spirit. A kid at heart, he delighted in spending time with his children and grandchildren. Whether playing sports, organizing water fights, giving saucer rides, or teasing and tickling the grandchildren he adored, Jim's presence brought joy and laughter wherever he went. He created cherished memories that his family will carry with them forever.

Jim was deeply committed to serving his community. He served on the Campbell-Tintah School Board for 15 years, held the position of Clerk for Champion Township for many years, and dedicated his time to the St. Gall's Cemetery Committee. He was an active member of the Campbell Lions Club and the National Farmers Organization (NFO). His faith remained a guiding force throughout his life, and he faithfully served his church community, including many years singing in the church choir.

In his spare time, Jim enjoyed fishing, golfing, playing cards, and gathering with family and friends. More than any hobby or accomplishment, however, he valued the relationships he cultivated throughout his life. He taught those around him what truly mattered: Faith, Family, and Friends — in that order. His example of humility, generosity, perseverance, and love will continue to inspire all who knew him.

Jim is survived by his beloved wife of 67 years, Ardis Arnhalt of Breckenridge, Minnesota; his children, Mary (Ron) Conzemius of Breckenridge, Minnesota; Carla Witte of Albertville, Minnesota; Lisa (Mark) Althoff of Wahpeton, North Dakota; Jerald (Tammi) Arnhalt of Princeton, Minnesota; Randy (Amy) Arnhalt of Melrose, Minnesota; Cheryl (Joseph) Williams of Albertville, Minnesota; and Amy (Jason) Ennen of Moorhead, Minnesota. He is also survived by 23 grandchildren, 29 great-grandchildren, his sister Monica Ingram of Breckenridge, Minnesota, as well as several brothers- and sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews, and many dear friends.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, Leo and Agnes Arnhalt; his daughter, Kathleen Lehman; his grandsons, Joseph Conzemius and Gabriel Arnhalt; and his great-grandchildren, Autumn Lehman and Gracie Cvancara.

Jim leaves behind a legacy built not only on the fields he farmed, but on the lives he touched. He will be remembered for his steadfast faith, his boundless love for his family, his service to his community, and his enduring belief that life's greatest blessings are found in hard work, love, and time spent with those you cherish. Though he will be deeply missed, his family takes comfort in knowing that his legacy lives on in the generations that follow him and in the many hearts forever changed by his example.

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.



Joseph Vertin & Sons Funeral Home, Breckenridge MN