

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF



VERNE J. HEJLIK

August 27, 1935 – November 7, 2024



A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN HEAVEN

Death is but a passing from darkness into light. I awakened from my sleep and beheld a glorious sight. It's a beautiful day in Heaven. Love is everywhere. Peace and joy surround me. Earth cannot compare. I could never begin to describe the wondrous things I see. If you could glimpse at Heaven, you'd shed no tears for me. Keep my memory in your heart. Time will pass and then, one beautiful day in heaven we'll be together again.

Verne J. Hejlik, 89, of Garner, passed away Thursday, November 7, 2024, at his home surrounded by family. He was recently diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia while in Arizona and his wish to be home was fulfilled by riding home on a medical jet flight.

Verne Joseph Hejlik, the son of Anton and Rosetta (Phillips) Hejlik, was born on August 27, 1935, on the family farm northwest of Garner. He attended Garfield No. 5 Country School and graduated from Garner High School in 1954. Verne served his country in the U.S. Army Reserves from 1954 to 1960. On October 15, 1955, he married Delores Mar Peterson 'Punky' at St. James Catholic Church in Forest City. They made their home in Garner where they raised their five children. Verne was employed at Howie Implement, Kerns Implement, Zrostlik Tire Service, and CF Industries before operating his business, Hejlik Auto Body, selling and working on cars. His shop was a popular place for family and friends to gather. He enjoyed his family and their large gatherings; and grandchildren (and greats) were his pride and joy. For Verne, family, faith, and church were a priority throughout his life. Verne and Delores enjoyed almost 58 years of marriage before Delores passed away from cancer in 2013.

In earlier years Verne especially enjoyed camping with his young family almost every summer weekend, snowmobiling with them during the winters, hunting in Wyoming (as well as locally), and motorcycling across the country. Verne and Delores began enjoying winters in Arizona in 1994, making new friends, traveling throughout the Southwest and into Mexico, going to flea markets, and spending time with other North Iowa snowbirds. Over the past several years, he enjoyed spending summers in Iowa and winters in Arizona with his companion, Beverly. In Garner, Verne enjoyed time with his family, and he always looked forward to annual class reunions to visit with his classmates. He could be frequently spotted scoping out Garner in his little yellow truck. While in Arizona with Beverly, Verne enjoyed his friends, neighbors, and activities at Valley Palms Mobile Home Park where one of his favorite activities was playing pool. In 2023 he was proud to have earned the title of the park's pool league champion.

He was a member of St. Boniface Catholic Church where he served in the funeral choir. He was also a past member of the Garner Lions Club.

Verne is survived by his four children, Deb (Jim) Rygh of Lake Mills, Susie (Butch) Kozisek of Ventura, Tim (Sharon) Hejlik of Garner and Tony (Melany) Hejlik of Garner; son-in-law, Rod (Barb) Dodd of Garner; 14 grandchildren, Michael (Lisa) Rygh, David (Margaret) Rygh, Travis (Tiffany) Dodd, Corey (Emily) Dodd, Brad (Casi) Kozisek, Ashley (Jay) Larkin, Chelsey (Tom) Cozad, Richie (Hannah) Kozisek, Lincoln (Lyndi) Harms, Lance (Alicia) Hejlik, Lucas (Taylor) Hejlik, Justine (Brad) McGrath, Jessica (Wyatt) Wood and Jamie Hejlik; 30 great-grandchildren; 2 great-great-grandchildren; his special companion Beverly Dietrich and her family; sister-in-law, Doris (Harley) Harms of Buffalo Center; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Anton and Rosetta Hejlik; wife, Delores; daughter, Cindy Dodd; son-in-law, Richard Fisher; sister, Marjorie (Bud) Savage; an infant brother, Donald; and brothers, Art (Betty) Hejlik and Harold Hejlik.



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FUNERAL MASS

St. Boniface Catholic Church – Garner, Iowa
10:30 a.m., Saturday, November 16, 2024

CELEBRANT

Rev. Fr. Andrew Marr

LECTOR

Mel Hejlik

MUSIC

Mary Kopacek, Organist
Mary Chambers, Cantor
St. Boniface Choir

USHER

Francis Oborny

CASKET BEARERS

Michael Rygh	David Rygh
Travis Dodd	Corey Dodd
Richie Kozisek	Lincoln Harms
Lance Hejlik	Lucas Hejlik

HONORARY BEARERS

Brad Kozisek	Ashley Larkin	Chelsey Cozad
Justine McGrath	Jessica Wood	Jamie Hejlik

MILITARY RITES

Garner Veterans Ceremonial Unit

BURIAL

St. Boniface Catholic Cemetery – Duncan, Iowa

The family invites everyone to a luncheon in the church basement immediately following the committal service.