

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



In Loving Memory Of  
*Richard "Rick" Wenzel*

June 9, 1953 - January 15, 2026



age · honor · respect · brav

spect · bravery · courage

**Richard Elert "Rick" Wenzel**, age 72, passed away on January 15, 2026, due to a sudden illness. Rick was born on June 9, 1953, in Luverne, Minnesota, to Bud and Jessie Wenzel. He was baptized and confirmed at Zion Lutheran Church in Hardwick, Minnesota. He graduated from Luverne High School in 1972. Rick later married Deb Stewart, and together they had a son, Joseph Dean Wenzel. The couple later divorced. Soon after, Rick met his life partner, Deb DeYoung, who was by his side, supporting him through life's journey until the end. Following graduation, Rick enlisted in the South Dakota Air National Guard, beginning a career of dedicated service that spanned 36 years, retiring as a Master Sergeant (E-7). After retiring from the Guard, Rick continued working for several contractors in the Sioux Falls area, as he needed to stay busy and enjoyed remaining active.

Rick was also a proud member of the Civil Air Patrol out of Pipestone. Through this involvement, he purchased a crop-dusting plane, which he used to support the agricultural community and bring smiles to local towns during their hometown celebrations. Rick was widely regarded as a legend in life, known for his strong presence, generosity, and unwavering willingness to help others. Whether within the racing community, the Air Guard, or his local communities, Rick was always ready to step in where help was needed. His kindness, service, and dedication left a lasting impression on all who knew him.

Rick is survived by his life partner, Deb DeYoung; son, Joseph Dean Wenzel (Randi); two grandchildren, Riley Wenzel and Kyia (Nathan) Mithun; one great-grandchild, Ethan; siblings Dean (Linda) Wenzel, David Swenson, and Paulette (Randy) Richters; and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Bud and Jessie Wenzel; brother, Robert James Wenzel; and sister, Patti Swenson.

Rick's legacy lives on through the many lives he touched by his service, generosity, and steadfast support of others.

In Loving Memory Of  
*Richard "Rick" Wenzel*



**Visitation**

Thursday, January 22, 2026  
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
Hartquist Funeral Home - Luverne, Minnesota

**Officiating**

Rev. Trevor Schubert

**Scripture**

Psalm 34:18  
Matthew 11:28-29  
John 11:25



*The family wishes to extend their sincere thanks for the many expressions of sympathy to them during this time.*

**Inurnment with Military Honors**

Friday, January 23, 2026  
1:00 PM  
South Dakota Veterans Cemetery  
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Arrangements under the care of  
**HARTQUIST FUNERAL HOME**