

**L**evi Wesley Eaton (74) passed away peacefully on February 7, 2026, at the Hospice House in Rapid City, South Dakota.

Levi was born in Faith, SD, on February 13, 1951, to Wesley and Barbara Eaton. He was the 3rd born with six siblings. He grew up on a ranch north of Red Elm, where he attended a country grade school, then went on to high school in Faith.

Levi joined the S.D. Army National Guard in Sept. of 1971, where he served honorably for 36 years. During his time in the service, he was a mechanic, heavy equipment operator, welder, and worked in supply maintenance. The service gave him many opportunities for travel and training. Some of his favorite trips were Alaska, Aberdeen, Maryland, and Kaiserslautern, Germany.

Levi and Laurie (Ginter) were high school sweethearts and were married in 1972. They had three children, Kathy, Stephanie, and Richard. In their early years of marriage, they lived and worked on ranches in Castle Rock and Hermosa, SD. Before marriage, Levi worked for Darrel Griffith, learning how to train horses, which is where his love for horses began. Levi then became an employee of the Civil Service for the National Guard, working in Rapid City, and retired in 2006. He then started his own little excavating business.

Levi and Laurie built a home and lived on an acreage near Piedmont, SD, raising their family, creating many memories over 53 years of marriage. If you asked Levi how it lasted so long, he said he wasn't married on the weekends, but others would say Laurie was a saint.

Levi had an unbridled passion for rodeo, wagon trains, welding, and his small excavating business. Levi was a high school rodeo advisor and helped

with 4-H rodeos and Jr. Livestock shows. He served on the Central States Fair committee for 17 years. He loved working with and meeting the PRCA cowboys while traveling with his buddy Tom Miller, helping him to drive to many rodeos.

Levi was a true, hardworking cowboy in every sense of the word. He believed in hard work. His generosity and willingness to help anyone was unmatched. If you ever needed him to help, all it took was one quick phone call, and he would be there to lend a hand. He had a gift for shooting the breeze with anyone, a stranger or friend. He loved to tease, give a nudge, a smile, then wink, and just in case he thought you needed advice, he was always willing to give that.

Levi built many horse trailers and worked on other metal projects. He gave CDL tests to truckers on weeknights after work and on weekends, always wanting to make extra money to provide for his family. Levi would drive the Ski for Light bus for the handicapped, which he really enjoyed.

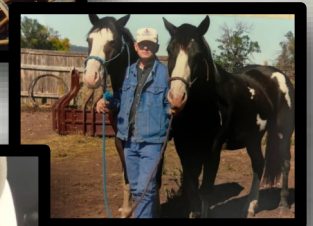
Levi was a proud father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, and would boast about each one of their individual achievements. You would always see Levi wearing his cowboy hat, wranglers, and boots, not "shoes," "Boots" stopping to say hi to anyone in his path. His laugh was a laugh we will never forget, and his one-liners were "Glad you got to see me!" and "If you ever need anything, let me know." The family fondly recalls him teasing them with the remark, "Good afternoon," even though it was still morning, because they were not up as early as he was.

We say goodbye to this strong, tough cowboy of ours who has now joined his son, Richard, in heaven.

Levi is survived by his wife, Laurie; children, Kathy (Jhett) Albers and Stephanie (Nate) Deuter; grandchildren, Austin (Maggie) Albers, Abby (Mike)

O'Brien, Danika and Paige Deuter; great-grandchildren, Emmitt and Ellison Albers; sisters, Judy (Dave) Gano, Wendy Blunt; brothers, Melvin (Denise) Eaton, and Jim (Candi) Eaton; sister-in-law Cindy Eaton and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Wesley and Barbara Eaton; his son, Richard Eaton; his brothers, Merton and Kenny Eaton; and a niece, Tanya Gano.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Black Hills Center for Aging.



# In Loving Memory Of Levi Wesley Eaton

## Funeral Service

Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 11:00am  
Kjerstad Events Center  
Rapid City, South Dakota

## Officiant

Pastor Tim Stuen

## Musical Selections

“When I Get Where I’m Going” - Brad Paisley  
“Horses in Heaven”  
“Never Not Remember You”  
“Go Rest High on That Mountain”  
“God Bless the USA”  
“The Cowboy Rides Away”

## Musicians

Arlie Hulm  
Megan McPherson

## Obituary Reading

Scott McGinley

## Pallbearers

Tom Miller, Bill Brown, Erdean Olsen,  
Jason Thorstenson, Ryan Miller,  
Levi Dacar and Caleb Dacar

## Final Resting Place

Black Hills National Cemetery  
Sturgis, South Dakota

Military Honors provided by SD National Guard



## Take Care of Yer Friends By: Baxter Black

Friend is a word that I don't throw around  
Though it's used and abused, I still like the sound.  
I save it for people who've done right by me  
And I know I can count on if ever need be.

Some of my friends drive big limousines  
Own ranches and banks and visit with queens.  
And some of my friends are up to their necks  
In overdue notes and can't write a check!

They're singers or ropers or writers of prose  
And others, God bless 'em, can't blow their own nose!  
I guess bein' friends don't have nothin' to do  
With talent or money or knowin' who's who.

It's a comf'terbul feelin' when you don't have to care  
'Bout choosin' your words or bein' quite fair  
'Cause friends'll just listen and let go on by  
Those words you don't mean and not bat an eye.

It makes a friend happy to see your success.  
They're proud of yer good side and forgive all the rest.  
And that ain't so easy, all of the time  
Sometimes I get crazy and seem to go blind!

Yer friend just might take you on home  
Or remind you sometime that you're not alone.  
Or ever so gently pull you back to the ground  
When you think you can fly with no one around.

A hug or a shake, whichever seems right  
Is the high point of givin', I'll tell ya tonight,  
All worldly riches and tributes of men  
Can't hold a candle to the worth of a friend.



# In Loving Memory



## Levi Wesley Eaton

February 13, 1951 ~ February 7, 2026