

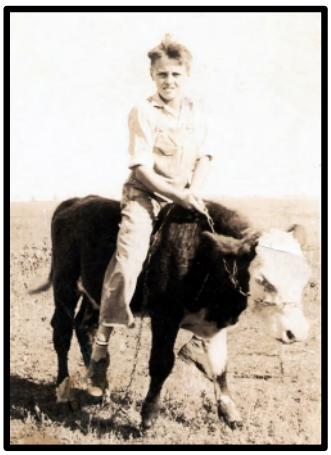
Laurell J. Kaple

January 19, 1927 – September 28, 2010

Memorial service for Laurell Kaple, 83, was held on October 1 at Trinity Lutheran Church for the Deaf. Rev. Matthew Nix officiated the memorial service.

Family present visitation was held at the Miller Funeral Home on September 30.

Kaple passed away peacefully on September 28 at Sanford USD Medical center in Sioux Falls. He was born in New Effington, S.D. and attended South Dakota School for the Deaf (SDSD) from 1933 to 1943. He left SDSD at the age of 16 to work on the family farm. Kaple moved to Watertown in 1955 and lived there until 1960 before moving to Sioux Falls. He worked as a welder and sheet metal cutter most of his life until retiring in 1987.



Kaple met the love of his life, Grace L.(Tucker) Otteman at a Deaf picnic in Yankton. The couple was united in marriage on December 28, 1964 at the Trinity Lutheran Church for the Deaf in Sioux Falls.

Kaple loved sports. During his younger days, he participated in softball, bowling and basketball for the Sioux Falls Association of the Deaf. He enjoyed watching sports on TV when he no longer was able to participate in sports. In 1980 he was inducted to the Midwest Athletic Association of the Deaf Hall of Fame. Kaple had Kaple had a great love for the South Dakota Association of the Deaf (SDAD) in which he was a member for more than 50 years. At one time he served as the SDAD treasurer. He was inducted into the SDAD Hall of Fame in 2002 for outstanding achievements in sports and a second one for outstanding achievements in Community Service.



1975 Boards
L to R: Ben Soukup, David Soukup, Jerrold Berke, Madison Stewart, Laurel Kaple, Ida Laughlin, and John Buckmaster

Kaple had a special way of teasing and often embarrassing members of the deaf community. His friends could share many funny stories about Kaple, especially back when he loved to go fishing with his friends.

He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Grace; son Laurell E. Kaple, stepson Daniel (Judy Dresden) Otteman and Dave Ottemen; and three step-grandchildren.