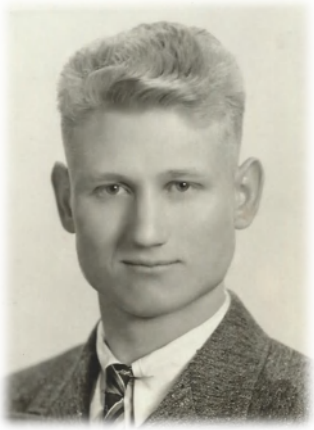


Royce Glenn Knapp

August 20, 1918 – October 22, 2001

Royce Glenn Knapp, 83, Aberdeen, died Monday, October 22, 2001, at Avera McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls, SD, as a result of an automobile accident.

Royce Knapp was born August 20, 1918, to Glenn and Inez (Taylor) Knapp in Minneapolis, MN. Early in his life, it was learned that he was deaf. Following his mother's death in 1923, he came to Northville, SD, to live with his uncle and aunt, Arthur and Mina Taylor, who raised him as one of their own. During his youth, his grandfather, Hiram Taylor, played a significant role in the formation of his character. He attended the South Dakota School for the Deaf in Sioux Falls, graduating in 1940. While attending school, he developed a lifelong passion for sports, especially baseball and basketball. He was a great fan of the Northern State University Wolves basketball team, seldom missing a home game.



He married Emma Liedtke in 1950. One child, Millie, was born of this marriage. Tragedy struck this family in 1969 when their daughter died of cancer. This loss created deep depression for his wife, Emma. She died of a broken heart two months later. He married Janice (Lautt) Schlecht on April 10, 1970. They made their home in Aberdeen, raising and educating her son Morgan as his very own.



1937-38 SDSD Boys Basketball team
Front row L to R: Harry Pischek, Glen Ziegler, Lester Kukuk, and Leonard Heater.
Back row L to R: Coach Albert Krohn, Frances Huffman, Joe Strandell, Raymond Schmitz, Palmer Larson, Carroll Christianson, Royce Knapp, Orville Rust, and Ivan Curtis, Athlete Manager.

Royce was a member of the Trinity Lutheran Church of the Deaf in Sioux Falls, SD. He was also a member of the South Dakota Association of the Deaf. Royce and Janice enjoyed many weekends camping with friends. He played with and coached softball teams in Aberdeen.

During his lifetime, he farmed at Northville for several years. He was employed for many years at Spaulding Auto and later at Brown County Implement in Aberdeen. He had been employed since 1990 at RDO Equipment. He was indeed a hard-working man, which contributed to his good health. Even with his deafness and speech impediment, his ability to communicate with others was phenomenal, which developed many long-lasting friendships.

Tragedy struck again on October 13, 2001, near Summit, SD. An automobile accident claimed his wife at the scene and resulted in Royce passing away at Avera McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls on Monday, October 22, 2001.

Survivors included two sisters, Marcella Okerlund of Union City, CA, and Beverly Bilgreen of Cary, NC; one niece; five nephews; one son, Morgan (Valerie) Schlecht, and three granddaughters, Leandra, Michaela and Kendra, all of Watertown, SD; five very close cousins who regarded Royce as a brother: Harley (Adele) Taylor and Norman (Marlys) Taylor of Aberdeen, SD, Arvin (Darlyn) Taylor of Northville, SD, and Miles (Shirley) Taylor and Irvin (Pam) Taylor of Great Falls, MT.

Funeral services were held on October 26, 2001, at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Aberdeen, SD, with Rev. Matthew Nix officiating. Interment followed at Sunset Memorial Gardens in Aberdeen, SD.