Kenneth Marvin Merrill

July 23, 1940 – February 22, 2006



Ken Merrill, a 1959 graduate of the South Dakota School for the Deaf (SDSD) passed away February 22, 2006 at Avera McKennan Medical Center in Sioux Falls with his family by his side. He was 65 years old.

Merrill attended SDSD from four years of age until he graduated in May of 1959. He always considered SDSD and his friends his home and family. Merrill was very active in sports, mainly football, basketball and track, throughout his high school years at SDSD. He was also active in student organizations at the school..



After graduation he attended the former Southern State Teacher's College in Springfield, SD. He earned a diploma in drafting in 1961. Merrill then worked for the SD Department of Transportation in Pierre until 1962 when he moved to California.

Merrill met and married his lifelong love, Billie Lee Stout, on August 1, 1964 in Los Angeles, CA. He worked for March AFB in Riverside, CA and then worked for E.E. Warren AFB in Cheyenne, WY and Reese AFB in Lubbock, TX before moving with his family to Bountiful, Utah and worked for the U.S. Geological Survey in Salt Lake City.

In 1995 the family moved back to Merrill's home state of South Dakota. Merrill worked for Communication Service for the Deaf (CSD) in various capacities. He had a passion for working for and with other deaf people.

Merrill, a diehard Chicago Cubs fan, was an active member of the South Dakota Association of the Deaf (SDAD), Deaf Seniors of South Dakota and Missouri River Valley Association of the Deaf. He also served as co-chair of the SDAD Hall of Fame committee.

He was also known for his American Sign Language storytelling. He loved to share stories relating to sports and deaf history.

Funeral services for Merrill were held on Monday, February 27, 2006 at the Hillcrest Baptist Church in Sioux Falls, SD officiated by the elders Signs of Grace Deaf Church. After the service, a delicious lunch was provided in the church gym.



