



Richard Simmons

December 13, 1941 - July 1, 2018

The Celebration of Life memorial service for Richard Simmons of rural Wadena will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 7, at the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Wadena, with Pastor Jim Stoneman presiding. Visitation with the family will be held at the church on Saturday from 9:30 a.m. until the time of the service.

Unexpectedly, Richard passed away at the age of 76, on Sunday, July 1, 2018, at the St. Cloud Hospital.

Richard was born to Richard Woodrow and Geneva Jennie (Matson) Simmons on December 13, 1941, at Minot, ND. The family lived in Norwich, ND until Richard was 10 years old, when they moved to their Minnesota farm. Richard graduated from Bertha-Hewitt high school in 1961 then headed north to Alaska. He was in Trutch, Canada on the Alaska Highway in 1964 when the 9.2 magnitude Good Friday Great Alaskan Earthquake hit. The next 40 years were spent raising a family in Anchorage and pursuing a career in the welding and fabrication trade. He was an expert in his craft and was a welding instructor for the Alaska Welding Institute. He worked on the Trans Alaska Pipeline in Valdez and Prudhoe Bay from the 1970's until he retired and moved back to Wadena, MN.

Richard was united in marriage with Melba Louise Wittmayer Fischer on

November 13, 2010, at the First Congregational UCC in Wadena. They made their home south of Wadena. Richard enjoyed and respected nature, especially when hunting, fishing, planting trees or just putting in the yard and garden. He was a member of Ducks Unlimited, the Alaska Mended Heart Association, and was a founding member of the Alaska Moose Federation. Richard was an active member of the First Congregational UCC and served with the Worship Ministry.

Preceding Richard in death were his parents, Richard and Jennie and sister, Joyce Sayers.

He will forever be missed by his devoted wife, Melba, of Wadena; his daughters, Tammy King and Stephanie Bergstrom, both of Anchorage, AK, and Sandee (Marvin) Hanan of Renton, WA; step-son Steven (Brenda) Fischer of Wadena; step-daughter Angela (Scott) Lambert of Becker; 13 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren; sisters, Janet Andrews of Federal Way, WA, Wanda Wood of Molalla, OR and Sherry (Steve) Hartung of Anchorage, AK; brother Wayne (Joyce) Simmons of Palmer, AK; along with a host of neighbors and friends.

Honorary urn bearers will be Wayne Simmons, Steve Hartung, Shannon Simmons, Jim Simmons, Jeremiah Simmons, Rich Brostrom and Bob Brostrom.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 7. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

First Congregational United Church of Christ
Colfax Ave. & 1st St. SW
Wadena, MN 56482

Service

JUL 7. 11:00 AM (CT)

First Congregational United Church of Christ
Colfax Ave. & 1st St. SW
Wadena, MN 56482

Tribute Wall



“ Schuller Family Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Richard Simmons



Schuller Family Funeral Homes - July 05, 2018 at 07:49 PM

JC

“ I only knew Richard for a short 5 years, upon my return to Cincinnati. Much to my amazement and surprise he was a fellow Vietnam War veteran. He's one of those rare people who Blended initiative and enthusiasm with patience and compassion that extended to both fellow human beings and all of his animal friends. Richard you will be missed and thank you for taking care of my pets.
John Cosco

John Cosco - September 15, 2018 at 04:27 PM

Jessica Keddy

“ I'm very sad to see the news that Richard passed away. I knew him while I worked at the Pioneer Journal - he was someone that I looked forward to seeing. I'm sorry for your loss.



Jessica Keddy - July 16, 2018 at 11:31 AM

JM

“ So sorry to hear about Richard. It was always such a pleasure visiting with him when he came into the store. So easy to talk to and great hearing about his hunting and fishing adventures. He will be missed.



Jason Merickel - July 13, 2018 at 03:18 PM

BL

“ Melba, I was saddened to hear of your loss. I am praying that you have comfort in your memories you and Richard shared. Your friend Betty Lipinski



Betty Lipinski - July 12, 2018 at 06:42 PM

SF

“ SANDY FRENCH lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons



SANDY FRENCH - July 10, 2018 at 11:30 AM

GG

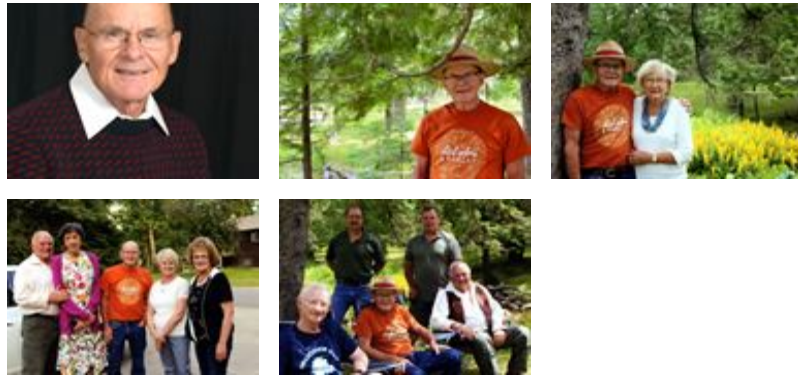
“ Gary And Rosie Graphenteen lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons



Gary and Rosie Graphenteen - July 08, 2018 at 07:28 PM



“ 40 files added to the album Life Tributes



Schuller Family Funeral Homes - July 05, 2018 at 06:36 PM



“ Large Basket Garden was purchased for the family of Richard Simmons.



July 05, 2018 at 05:27 PM



“ Gene & Sandy Kapphahn lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons



Gene & Sandy Kapphahn - July 05, 2018 at 01:52 PM

JK

“ Thoughts and prayers are with you all.
Cory and Jodi Kimber and family



Jodi kimber - July 05, 2018 at 11:04 AM

MB

“ Matt & Carla Blashack lit a candle in memory
of Richard Simmons



Matt & Carla Blashack - July 05, 2018 at 09:34 AM

MP

“ Morris and Karen Priebe



Morris & Karen Priebe - July 04, 2018 at 01:12 PM

JP

“ John And Judy Pokorney lit a candle in
memory of Richard Simmons



John and Judy Pokorney - July 04, 2018 at 09:41 AM



“ *Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Richard Simmons.*



July 04, 2018 at 08:32 AM



“ *Brother's and Sister's of Melba purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of Richard Simmons.*



Brother's and Sister's of Melba - July 04, 2018 at 08:28 AM



“ *Karen Munson lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons*



Karen Munson - July 04, 2018 at 04:38 AM



“ *Ruby Lynk lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons*



Ruby Lynk - July 04, 2018 at 12:28 AM

RB

“ Say it ain't so, Joe.

I was a "lucky one" to have known Richard, one of the elite running backs in B.H.H.S. football history -- and one of the nicest persons in the Class of 1961. My condolences to the Simmons and Wittmayer families. What a good guy we'll all remember.

RBailey

RBailey - July 03, 2018 at 08:45 PM

WS

“ Wilferd & Shirley lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons



Wilferd & Shirley - July 03, 2018 at 07:46 PM

TF

“ Tonia Dirks & Family lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons



Tonia Dirks & family - July 03, 2018 at 05:56 PM

IB

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with the family at this time.



Irene and Jerry Baron - July 03, 2018 at 04:13 PM

JZ

“ *Joanie Zirbes lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons*



Joanie Zirbes - July 03, 2018 at 03:41 PM

JZ

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Joanie Zirbes - July 03, 2018 at 03:37 PM

DK

“ *Spent many fun times with Richard and the Simmons family over the years.
It was a shock because Richard was always so physically fit and a hard worker.
He will be missed by many.
You have our thoughts and prayers at this time.*

Duane Kern - July 03, 2018 at 02:40 PM

JK

“ *Jackie Kern lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons*



Jackie Kern - July 03, 2018 at 01:07 PM

BP

“ So sorry to hear about Richard. Oh, what a well dressed man and kind. Words are hard to say and tell you how deeply we feel for you and your family. We are thankful we were able to ride through the woods on McIntire's sleigh this past winter and spend a fun day together. It was a memorable event. Your memories will bring a smile to your face and happiness to your heart. When you reflect on these memories, Richard will be watching over you until it comes time for you to be with him in heaven. May the Lord be with you and know we are thinking and praying for you. Barry & Sandi

Barry & Sandi Pratt - July 03, 2018 at 10:39 AM

TA

“ This is to share with the family. I remember all the great times we had together when we were in high school. He was a great friend.

tom aldrich - July 03, 2018 at 10:32 AM

CB

“ Conrad And Shirley Van Batavia lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons



Conrad and Shirley Van Batavia - July 03, 2018 at 10:31 AM

BB

“ Bob Branstner lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons



bob branstner - July 03, 2018 at 10:14 AM

RA

“ *Rita Anderson lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons*



Rita Anderson - July 03, 2018 at 07:41 AM

KB

“ *Keith And Janice Bastian lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons*



Keith and Janice Bastian - July 03, 2018 at 07:06 AM

Julie
Eidenschink

“ *Julie Eidenschink lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons*



Julie Eidenschink - July 02, 2018 at 09:46 PM

AJ

“ *Allan Lynk And Karen Johnson lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons*



Allan Lynk and Karen Johnson - July 02, 2018 at 07:56 PM

MS

“ Mike And Lea Snyder lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons



Mike and Lea Snyder - July 02, 2018 at 07:11 PM

BW

“ Bob & Phyllis Wilkening lit a candle in memory of Richard Simmons



Bob & Phyllis Wilkening - July 02, 2018 at 07:09 PM

DW

Dean and I have the greatest memories of your vacations with us here in Florida. As we often told Richard, he was the truly the most interesting man we knew. We can still see Richard scaling the orange trees in our back woods determined to take some fresh oranges back to Minnesota. He shared so much of his life and himself with us, and our hearts are deeply saddened over this tremendous loss.

Dean & Candy Wittmayer - July 03, 2018 at 12:52 PM

JW

We all rejoiced with Melba when she brought Richard into our congregation at Wadena UCC. My most sincere condolences to Melba, my fellow choir member.

JoAnn White - July 04, 2018 at 08:16 AM

AP

Melba, my sincere sympathy. Richard was a very kind person, got to know him thru McDonalds having coffee with his buddies there. I knew his mother also as a very kind lady. We will miss him.
Arleen A. Paulson - Paulson Agency Realty, Wadena

Arleen A. Paulson - July 05, 2018 at 10:42 AM



Melba, you have our deepest sympathy. Prayers are with you. Pete & Tammy Christopherson, St Joseph

Tammy Christopherson - July 09, 2018 at 10:08 AM