



Willmar Samuelson

January 17, 1919 - July 1, 2005

Willmar R. Samuelson was born on January 17, 1919 in the hills of Eagle Lake Township in a log house his great-grandfather built when he came from Sweden. His parents were Leonard & Josephine (Simonson) Samuelson. He was baptized at Pelican Lake Lutheran Church of Ashby and confirmed at St. Olaf Lutheran Church of Dalton. He attended grade school in Dist. 6 at Eagle Lake Township. Willmar passed away in his apartment at Willow Creek in Henning on July 1st. He worked with his father on the home farm until he was old enough to go out for different work. He did construction work building new homes in Fergus Falls until he volunteered for military service on Dec. 2, 1941. He did his basic training at Camp Roberts, CA and Fort Lewis, WA. He spent time in the Aleutian Islands. He returned and joined the 10th Mountain Ski Association. Before entering the service he had belonged to the National Ski Association and had skied in tournaments in Glenwood, North Dakota and Dalton, and other areas. When he returned from the Aleutian Islands in route he had a delay and in October 1944 he came home and married Betty Johnson of Parkers Prairie. They went to Camp Swift, TX before he left for Italy. He served as a communication Sgt. for Co. B, 87th Regiment of the 10th Mountain Div. He fought in the North Apennines to the Po Valley. He was discharged on Sept. 29, 1945. He received the Purple Heart on April 14, 1945, the Silver Star from General George P. Hayes in the field on April 2, 1945 and Bronze Star, along with various service theatre ribbons. When he returned from active duty he did several odd jobs before ending up in Fergus Falls

building homes. He moved to Henning where he started out repairing and building turkey barns, then building grain elevators for Volden Construction. He worked there until his retirement when they moved to the state of Washington and Mount Rainer where he had trained. While in Washington he met up with some old army buddies and got involved in service organizations such as the VFW, the DAV and the Military Order of the Purple Heart where he held office. He also did volunteer work at the Veteran's Hospital serving coffee to walk in patients. He belonged to the CB Radio Club and the Mount Rainer and Big Sky 10th Mountainers Chapters where most of the fellows lived that he had served with. Before moving to Washington he belonged to Eagle Lake Lutheran Church and Grace Lutheran Church. He was also a member of the Faith Haven Youth Lodge Board and volunteered on building projects south of Battle Lake. They moved back from Washington to help build a home for his son Dennis and family in Bertha. In 1996 Dennis passed away. Willmar purchased the building site and helped to raise his grandson. Willmar was preceded in death by his parents; children Elaine, Donald & Dennis; and his brothers Glen, Milo & Roy. He is survived by his wife Betty of Henning; daughter Kendra of Shoreline, WA; son Kerry (Cindy) of Ostego; grandchildren Michelle (Ben) Beito of Greenbush, Jill (Al) Heinert of South Dakota, Ryan (Michelle) of Bellingham, WA, Erika (Luke) Teigland of Baxter; great-grandchildren Kylie & Kasha Teigland, Kael; brothers Carl (Joyce) of Underwood, Ralph (Darlene) of Parkers Prairie, Leonard Jr. (Mardel) of Clearwater & Dennis (Norma) of Battle Lake; nieces, nephews. Burial with military honors by the Minnesota National Guard will take place in the Woodside Cemetery at Wrightstown following the services. View this Videotribute

Tribute Wall

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“ Willmar has been missed by the other WWII group members. I will never forget his stories and his pride in the 10th MT Division. I apologize for not being able to attend the funeral. We have lost another American hero and a member of "The Greatest Generation!"

Dr James R. Tuorila - July 01, 2005 at 12:00 AM