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01/18/2013 - Tommy Bates



Funeral services for Tommy Bates, age 75, of Whitney, Nebraska will be Friday, January 18, 2013 at 2:00 PM at Chamberlain Chapel in Chadron with Tony Tangwall officiating.

Burial will be at Greenwood Cemetery in Chadron.

Visitation will be Thursday, January 17, 2013 at Chamberlain Chapel.

A memorial has been established for the Chadron Volunteer Fire Department or the Crawford Rural Fire Department. Donations may be sent to Chamberlain Chapel, PO Box 970, Chadron, NE 69337.

Online condolences can be made at www.chamberlainchapel.com

Tommy passed away on January 11, 2013 at Crestview Care Center in Chadron.

Tommy was born on August 11, 1937 in Española, a small town in New Mexico. He lived his childhood on his folks ranch south of Clayton, New Mexico. Tommy was a rancher who loved his cattle and horses. He said he was, "a jack of all trades, master of none." He broke horses and farmed also.

Tommy graduated from Clayton, New Mexico High School in 1956. He married Dora Lee Gossett in June of 1956. They had 56 wonderful loving years together. They have three sons, Gene, Tommy Jr., and Richard. Gene is a lifetime trucker who always helped his dad and Richard anytime he could. Tommy W. Jr. is working in Amarillo, Texas. Richard has been with his dad and mother, working alongside his Daddy since a very young age.

Tommy was also looking into how to expand his ranches. In 1976, he leased a ranch at Big Piney, Wyoming. Dora Lee always said she lived one year there. He was there about six months, making many trips back and forth to their ranch in New Mexico. In 1991, they bought a ranch north of Whitney, Nebraska. It was said to be a "mid-life crisis move." Tommy never met a stranger and loved going to cattle sales, many times just to see old friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Oren and Vivian Bates, infant sibling, and brother-in-law Bobby Green.

Tommy will be greatly missed by many nieces, nephews, and a host of friends.

Immediate Survivors:

Wife: Dora Lee of Whitney, NE.

Sons: Gene Bates (Wanda) of Clayton, NM; Tommy W. Bates Jr. of Amarillo, TX; Richard Bates (Charla) of Whitney, NE.

Sister: Barbara Green of Clayton, NM

Grandchildren: 4

Great Grandchildren: 12

Chamberlain Chapel of Chadron is in charge of arrangements.