



Don McKee

January 2, 1938 - November 24, 2010

Don E. McKee, 72, Elm Creek died Wednesday, November 24, 2010 at Good Samaritan Hospital in Kearney. Memorial services will be 11 AM, Tuesday, Nov. 30th at O'Brien Straatmann Funeral Home in Kearney. The Rev. Dean Pofahl will officiate. Interment will be held at a later date. Visitation will be 5-7pm, Monday at the funeral home. Memorials are suggested to the Elm Creek Volunteer Fire Department. On-line condolences may be submitted to osafh.com. O'Brien Straatmann Funeral Home in Kearney is in charge of arrangements. Don was born January 3, 1938 in Lexington, NE to Elmer and Anna Mae (Smith) McKee. He grew up in the Lexington, Overton and Elm Creek area. He received his education in Elm Creek. He was married to Sharon Bowie in Elm Creek on May 25, 1957. He graduated from Kearney State College in 1961 with a B.S. in Science. He attended graduated school at the University of Oklahoma and Kansas State. He lived in various communities including Elm Creek, Eddyville, Alma, Holbrook and Phillipsburg, KS, where he taught in various school districts. He taught high school for 33 years. He also farmed and was involved in ranching and real estate. Survivors include his wife of Elm Creek; son, Mack McKee of Sturgis, SD; daughters, Deborah Penny and husband, Dale of Elm Creek, Cindi Brestel and husband, Tom of Holdrege, Shelly McKee of Avon, IN and Trudy Carter and husband, Craig of Wichita, KS; grandchildren, Angela Nunn of Kearney, Megan Burkle and husband, Josh of Holdrege, Remmington Penny of Elm Creek, Emily Brestel of Lincoln, Jessica Freeman and husband, Mark of Sturgis, SD, Blake

McKee of US Army stationed in Germany, Alexis Carter of Wichita, KS; and great-grandchildren, Rhiannon Freeman of Sturgis, SD and Kaiya Ellen Burkle of Holdrege. He is also survived by an aunt, Gail Magnuson of Lexington. He was preceded in death by his parents and granddaughter, Carrie Penny.

Tribute Wall



“ *Don McKee*

January 28, 2023 at 08:01 AM



“ *Sharon and family, What a treasure Don was for the kids he taught through the years and also to his fellow teachers. He will be missed. We always enjoyed his funny emails and his desire to keep in touch with friends and family. We will keep you in our prayers.*

Jack Dresslar Family - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM



“ *Dear Sharon and family. I'm so sorry to hear about Don's passing. What a wonderful person he was. It meant so much to be to see him at my mother's funeral visitation. You both turned a terrible day for me into a positive time. I always thought the world of Don. As I said in the letter I sent to him, he demanded respect and he gave it out. He asked for the best in everyone. There is no doubt he played a huge role in making me who I am today. I think about him often and remember all he stood for at our school. The world has truly lost an icon that has touched many, many lives. He will be forever imbedded in my memory until the day I die. Dwight T. Jones MD*

Dwight T. Jones, MD - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM



“ *I am from the graduating class of 1971 in Overton. There are alot of people that got me to where I am today but Don was one of the people that showed me the right path to take. He has been thought of alot in my life. It was my privilage to of had him in my life. I will never forget him, thanks Mr. McKee*

Tom C. Smith - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

DF

“ Dear mckee family. Don was a dear friend to me and my family. I will never forget him. He was my science teacher, friend and inspiration to me and many others i am sure. We went fishing together many times and kept in touch recently via facebook. I will always remember the day that he suprised me and showed up for our wedding it meant so much to me to have him there. I am grateful for all the kind words he said over the years. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. Duane, Amy and Jaxson Friedly Shawnee Kansas

duane amy and jaxson friedly - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

ML

“ My thoughts and prayers are with Mr. McKee's family at this time. He was absolutely one of the finest, most dedicated teachers I've ever had in my years of education. Mr. McKee wrote an inspiring note in my Science Notebook when I was a Freshman in high school, and I not only kept that notebook when I graduated, but took it with me to graduate school. Whenever I stumbled, or felt like I couldn't make it, I took that notebook out and read his words -- they always inspired me. When I finished my Ph.D., I wrote to Mr. McKee to let him know how his teaching had impacted my life, and we stayed in touch after that time, even moreso through Facebook. We will miss you so much Mr. McKee, thank you for dedicating so much of your energy and passion to your students. We will never, ever forget the life lessons you taught us (even if we did forget some of the science).

Mary (Miller) Lewis - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

AS

“ I would like to tell you that I'm sorry for your loss. I had Mr. McKee in school here in Phillipsburg and truly enjoyed him. He was a great teacher and well liked by a lot of the students. May God give you the strength to carry on and His loving arms are wrapped around you for comfort. God Bless you and your family. Amy Stephen

Amy Miler Stephen - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

RS

“ Life begins and ends so fast! Mr. McKee was at the hospital in Holdrege when both of our children were born. Sorry to hear that he has passed.

Roy and Katie Shellito - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

PH

“ By now there are no words of condolence that haven't been spoken, no cliché of sorrow that hasn't been uttered. Suffice it to say...Don touched many, many lives in a good way. He left his mark on many and lived a full life in the process. From one of the many students under his tutelage...Thank you, thank you for opening doors of learning with insight, humor and respect, then becoming a friend in later life. I am a better person having known you, Don. Sweet Peace be yours and that of your family. In humble gratitude, Peg Holen

Peg Holen - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

BS

“ I was lucky enough to run into Mr McKee several times over the past year, either at a drug store at a Dr's office. I'm glad that I told him he was my favorite teacher in school, and not because I liked Biology. He taught me alot more than Science, as I'm sure hundreds of others can attest to that. Mr McKee, you fought the good fight, its your time to rest. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all your friends and family, you will be missed Greatly!

Bill Shaw - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

JF

“ Don was a really close freind of mine. We went goose hunting and fishing together when I was in high school. He always had a joke to tell me, or a good story. We spent alot of hours talking about farming, ranching, and life in general. Don was a great teacher in school, but what he really taught me about life will be with me forever. He always made me smile and laugh. I will cherish the time's we spent together forever. He will be greatly missed by our family. Thank you for everthing Don. Your Friend, Jerod, Amber, Sierra, Abby and Bailey Roth

Jerod Roth and Family - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

DJ

“ Sharon and Family Our prayers are with you in this difficult time. Don was such a gifted teacher. His lessons went far beyond the science classroom. He will be missed.

Dale Burkhead and Jerri Johnson - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

KD

“*Mr. McKee was my science/biology teacher in Phillipsburg. He was a great inspiration to my love of science and biology. He was widely known as the happy hall greeter to many with his hands folded and his kind demeanor. I majored in Biology and now teach in the same room he taught :0) My thoughts go to him family and friends and the many lives he touched.*

Kelley (Northup) Dibble - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

DC

“*Many fond memories of Mr. McKee, from grade school thru high school. He definitely made a positive difference in my life. From dissecting frogs, to his paddle, teaching us to think, the positive role discipline should play in school, cramming for the big test only to have it consist of 4 common sense questions, etc. And he was a caring individual with a good sense of humor. He will be missed. He made a difference for many and his impact will live for many years. We need more like hiim today more than ever!*

David Collins - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

JB

“*Mr. McKee, Thank you for all you have shared with me. I will cherish the memories you gave me in Freshman Science class then years later having the opportunity to run a fireworks stand together. You are truly one of a kind with your generosity, humor, and playful spirit you brought to all. You will be missed! Again, thank you for being here for us.*

Jared Barta - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

JB

“ Don taught my children here at PHS and although Science may not have been a favorite subject for all of them - they certainly ranked Mr. McKee as a favorite teacher because he treated them all with such respect. That is how he treated all of us as parents and as co-workers, too. We miss him as an educator, co-worker and friend. God's blessings to his family. The Baumgartner family

Jackie Baumgartner - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

JP

“ My heart goes out to you and your family. I was a new teacher when met Don. I remember being in the same lunch with him. It was a rare thing when he did not fill his plate a second time. School lunches were a bit different then. He always had a smile and humor to brighten the day of all of us at the teacher's table. What a wonderful life to celebrate. I hope that all of his friends and family remember that we are blessed for having known him.

Julie Peterson-Shea - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

RZ

“ Sharon and the entire McKee Family Please except our condolences at this most difficult time. Don was a tremendous man who did so much for other people. His warm and caring nature will be in our memories forever. Randall and Stefanie Zimmerman Junction City Kansas

Randall Zimmerman - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

JK

“ Sharon and families. I am so sorry about loss of Don. He is now in heaven without pain and suffering. He was a great Science teacher in Overton and a wonderful person. He will be miss by many.

Joyce Klintworth - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

BE

“ Talk to anyone who had a class with Don and they will probably remember him as one of their favorite teachers. I know I do. He brought a unique combination of humor and an intensity for the subject matter he taught to the classroom. He would do whatever it took to help you understand a concept or assignment. He always treated everyone with the same respect, no matter who they were. I also remember his genuine compassion for students when they were going through a tough time. He was a rare and special person who will not be soon forgotten. We are all a bit better for having known him.

Brennan Engle - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

KC

“ Dearest McKee Family: I'm so sorry to learn of your incredible loss. Please know I share in that loss with you and so many others. May each and everyone of you find comfort in the many memories you've built together over the years. Not a glance was taken that your father didn't wave with a huge smile.....I will remember him fondly. Take care of one another and know you are in my heart, thoughts & prayers. I think the world of your entire family.....hold your mother close for me. And a special hello to Mack & Trudy..... In deepest sympathy & friendship, Kim Ehnes & family

Kim (Shubert) Ehnes - Julesburg, CO - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

MF

“ Dear Sharon and Family, Don was our special friend who taught us that friendship can go beyond national borders. It was so delightful for us that we had lived with Don as one family. The ties between you and us that Don left will be our treasure. We will all truly miss him... With our deepest sympathy and love, Don's Japanese Son and Family, Masa (Masakatsu), Masami, Shotaro, Momoka, Sousuke

Masa and Family - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

FE

“ Never got to know you as an adult, Don. But enjoyed exchanging emails the last few years. There are conversations I wanted to have with you, but now I guess I will have to wait a while. Former neighbor (2 houses down) ElmCreek in the 50s. Floyd Else (Jr.) Bellevue Washington

Floyd Else - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

TM

“ I'm so sorry to hear about Mr. McKee. He was a fabulous science teacher. He was always very enthusiastic about teaching. He was even patient with those of us who weren't very fond of dissecting frogs! Many thoughts to his family.

Tara (Kipp) Marshall - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

AF

“ Sharon and Family, Don was one of a kind. It was a privilege to teach two doors down from his class room. He kept our staff positive and reminding us what we were there for, the kids. I will never forget the cartoons that would mysteriously appear on the mirror in the lounge when someone would show the better part of themselves. The years that Don rented our basement apartment showed what a family oriented man he was. He would never interrupt our family time and would often tell me that the time with family is so short, so always cherish those moments. Thank you Sharon for bringing Don to Mel's funeral and my hospital room when I had knee surgery. It meant so much to me and my family. He will be missed by so many but his teaching will live on. Anna Schremmer and Family

Anna Schremmer and Family - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

MJ

“ Don was one of the neatest teachers I've had the privilege to know in my work with personnel at Phillipsburg USD #325. He always brought a smile to our faces and pulled a few jokes on us too! I'm so happy to have had contact with him on Facebook the past few years as he never lost his faith and great outlook on life through all of his perils. A wonderful man lost now until we meet again. Blessings to Don's family as you learn to live as he did.

Mary Jackson - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

DZ

“ To Sharon and the family, as you well know Don will be missed. I have searched for the right words for this message since his passing and they just don't seem to come to me. He was a true friend to the end and old school in his values and I am sure that is one of the reasons we got along so well. Yet at the same time, he embraced the new when it was proven useful like the computer and email. He was able to maintain contact with all he touched and made us all feel like we were the only ones. I know from long talks with him that his family was very dear to him and that you were the special ones. His faith, his deep commitment to you, and his love of his work as a teacher and rancher in that order are the gifts he gives to you. My kids grew up knowing "Kee". I knew him as a true professional dedicated to giving his all in everything he did and, of course, in true McKee style, spending every day looking for the humor in life. Our hearts go out to you. Cherish the memories. He was a jewel. Doug "Z", Jana, and the girls Zillinger

Douglas G. Zillinger - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

JE

“ Don was a terrific teacher and what a professional he was. HE put so much humor into the Phillipsburg high school and loved to play tricks on all the staff, including me. All the students that had Don in the classroom were better for their experience. They just don't make teachers like MR. MCKEE anymore. I was so glad to get to visit with him at Beth's wedding this past summer. Many prayers to you and your family, treasure the memories !!!

Julia Engle - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

TF

“ Donnie Mc, Big Fella, Ol' Smile and Nod, It was my pleasure to meet up with the "Big Fella" in Phillipsburg. What a wonderful gift it was to me during a very trying time in my life. The "Big Fella" helped me put it all into perspective, a true, honest and loyal friend. Donnie Boy, you brought alot of joy into my heart and now you bring tears to my eyes. Words cannot say enough, God Bless and may you rest in peace, love ya man. To Sharon and the McKee family, my deepest heartfelt condolences.

Tom Barta and Family - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

LF

“ Sharon, I will truly miss this dear man. I always enjoyed his e mails and messages. He has fought the good fight along with you by his side. God bless you dear cousin and my prayers are with you and your family. Lona

Lona (Bowie) Ferguson - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

PF

“ This is what a really good teacher should be. This is what you were and my kids are better for having known him, in the classroom and out. I will miss you, Science Guy. God Bless Your Wonderful Family, Para P

Paulette Marez & Family - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

MA

“ I worked with Don at Phillipsburg High School for three years and he was such a great mentor to me. I was lucky enough to keep in touch via email with Don after I left, and his spirit and humor always made me smile. He will truly be missed.

Michael Adams - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

PH

“ My heart goes out to you, Sharon and all your family. The good fight is done and now..no more pain or suffering. Nonetheless he will be missed by many! He was a heck of a guy, a great teacher and dear friend. In prayer, Peg Holen

Peg Holen - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

HS

“ He was my high school science teacher in Phillipsburg, KS. We all loved him. He will be dearly missed. Thoughts and prayers to your family.

Heather Shelton - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

M8

“ So sorry to hear about your loss.. Mr. McKee was one of the best teachers we had at Phillipsburg! Our thoughts and prayers to the family...

Mitch and Cindy Ross-- Phillipsburg High 88 and 87 - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM

AK

“ Mr. McKee was my absolute favorite teacher in high school. I was so grateful to reconnect with him years later by way of Facebook. He was a wonderful man and will be missed by many. I pray that God keeps his family wrapped in His arms and helps them through this difficult time.

Angie Wisinger Kogl - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM