



Ray Soderquist

May 30, 1917 - January 16, 2012

Ray F. Soderquist, 94 of Kearney, passed away Monday, January 16, 2012 at the Mt. Carmel Keen Home in Kearney. Funeral Services will be 11:00 AM, Tuesday at the Zion Chapel at Bethphage Mission in Axtell. The Revs. Eric Leshner and John Gosswein will officiate. Interment will be in the Bethphage Mission Cemetery. Visitation will be 5-7pm, Monday at O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home in Kearney. Memorials are suggested to Bethphage Mission in Axtell or the music programs at First Lutheran Church in Kearney in care of Ray's daughter, Karen McIntosh at 6118 Gemfield Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. Online condolences may be submitted to osrfh.com. O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home in Kearney is in charge of arrangements. Ray F. Soderquist was born May 30, 1917, near Vliets, a small town between Axtell and Frankfort, Kansas. He was the oldest of four children, but a sister, Eleanor, died as a baby, leaving three brothers, Ray, John, and William. Ray attended a rural school, Dist. 51, graduating from Axtell High School in 1934. He attended Bethany College, Lindsborg, KS, for one year, where he especially enjoyed singing in the a capella choir. His parents could not afford to send Ray to more than one year of college, so he worked for farmers in the area for a time, then enrolled in Brown-Mackie Business College in Salina. While there, he took a Civil Service test and soon received an appointment from the Air Forces in Washington, D.C. He started work there in 1940, joining the Augustana Lutheran Church, where he sang in the choir and was active in the Luther League. That was where he met a

Minnesota girl, Elnora Swanson. They fell in love and were married February 27, 1943. Being mechanically talented, the printing presses interested Ray, and that became the focus of his work with the Government. In 1944, Ray transferred to Denver, CO, where he was appointed Field Service Officer of the Government Printing Office. Their three children were born in Denver: Karen Elizabeth, Margaret Lynn, and Leland Ray. In 1952, three-year-old Leland suddenly started having epileptic seizures, which later caused mental retardation. Many changes occurred in the Soderquists' lives as they searched for the best answers to Leland's problems. Thinking a rural life might be better for him, Ray resigned his job and the family moved to a farm in southern MN in 1955. This did not help. When an offer came for a Government job with the Department of Agriculture in Kansas City, MO, the farm was sold and the family moved to Kansas City. A still better offer came in 1964 when Ray was reinstated to a job with General Services Administration at the Federal Center in Denver. Denver was once more 'home' until Ray retired in 1976. He built a home in Kearney, NE, in order that Leland could have supervised care at Bethphage Mission in Axtell, NE. In January of 1980, Leland moved to Bethphage and made many visits to his parental home in Kearney. Ray was a member of First Lutheran Church in Kearney and a past member of the 1733 Barbershop Chorus. Throughout all these moves and changes, Ray continued to pursue his interests in barbershop singing, work outdoors, fly-fishing, hunting, and church and civic activities. After 24 years, the huge house became too difficult for Ray and Elnora, so their home was sold and they moved to the Regency Retirement Community and later to Northridge Retirement Community, when greater levels of assistance were needed. He leaves behind his wife of 68 years, Elnora of Kearney, daughters Karen McIntosh (husband Tom) and Margaret Strecker (husband Richard), and son Leland, as well as grandsons Ben McIntosh (wife Lara) and Nat McIntosh, from Los Angeles, CA, and Colorado Springs, CO, respectively.

Tribute Wall



“ *Ray Soderquist*

January 28, 2023 at 08:01 AM



“ *My sincerest condolences to you all, and especially to Elnora. Ray and Elnora have since the 80s been my friends through genealogy, and I am also a distant relative of Ray - they were the first American relatives I found, though, regrettably, we never met in persons, but many years of intensive correspondence led us to feel like closely joined together, almost like a family. May you rest in peace, Ray, after all these year on this Earth - I rest in safe confidence that the Mighty God will take good care of you for all the good things you have done to others during your long life!*

Per-Olof Widing - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM



“ *Hello, My sincere condolences. My father currently passed away and was reading through the obituaries, noticed Mr. Soderquist passed away. I always remember him stopping by the travel agencies that I worked at in Kearney. He seemed such a sincere man. He was one of the people who I will always remember in my career as a travel agent, I don't even remember if he travelled, bought a ticket or not -- but he forever will be remembered and I missed him when he failed to always stop by the agencies for some sort of assistance. Just to let you know. Thank you.*

Julie (clausen) Robertson - August 21, 2013 at 05:59 AM