

John E. Bell

December 6, 1945 – February 16, 2016

Funeral services for John E. Bell, 70, of Wheatland were held 1 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 22 at the First Christian Church in Wheatland with Father Dan Canda officiating. Burial was in the Wheatland Cemetery.

John Bell passed away on Tuesday, Feb. 16 at his home near Wheatland.

He was born to Walbridge and Darline (Lutz) Bell in Johnson City, Tenn. on Dec. 6, 1945.

He attended country schools and graduated from Gregory High School, Gregory, S.D. John was a life-long learner and avid reader of electronics, amateur radio, and military history.

From 1965 to 1969, John served in the United States Navy with time spent on the USS La Salle (LPD-3). He continued his service in the Nebraska Army National Guard, headquarters Battalion, 1st Battalion 168th Field Artillery as a radio teletype operator. He also served in the Civil Air Patrol, with the Scottsbluff, Neb. squadron, then as an assistant communications officer for the Wyoming wing, and finally with the Wheatland squadron.

John was a general class amateur radio operator, KA0INI.

John served as a peace officer for 27 years. He served as a police officer in Scottsbluff for 17 years, as a deputy sheriff for Kimball County, Neb., deputy and undersheriff for Platte County and as a Wyoming State Parks Law Enforcement Ranger at Glendo State Park.

John was currently certified Wyoming and National Registry Emergency Medical Technician.

In 2014, John retired from his most enjoyable paying job, as a National Park Service Seasonal Interpretive Guide at Fort Laramie National Historic Site to be home on the farm with his family

and teach his two young sons.

From 1993 to 2003, John struggled with end-stage kidney disease and dialysis treatments, but with the life changing gift of a living donation of a perfectly matched kidney from his sister, Marilyn, John was able to return to law enforcement and then venture into interpreting and teaching history for visitors at Fort Laramie National Historic Site. Because of Marilyn's gift, over time anti-rejection medication was no longer needed to maintain his restored health.

On May 24, 2003 John and Kristina Johnson were married at the Anglican Church of the Ascension (Danforth Chapel) in Fort Collins, Colo. Their family has been blessed with two sons.

John is survived by his wife, Kris; sons, Juanito and Emiliano all of the family farm near Wheatland; siblings, Carson Bell (Rita) of Oral, S.D., Darline Brightman (Gary) of Pioneer, Ohio, and Marilyn Schneider (Arnie) of Sioux Falls, S.D.; five nieces; two nephews; four great nieces; and five great nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents and on Feb. 10, 1983 his son, Scott Everett Bell.

Serving as pallbearers will be Steve Fullmer, Casey Osback, Justin Cawiezel, Leonard Noyce, Mike Van Why, Carson Bell, Juanito Bell, and Emiliano Bell. Leading the procession to the grave, his daughter officer, Beth Reid.

Any attending uniformed personnel or volunteer EMS personnel please join in forming two honor columns leading to the grave site.

The Gorman Funeral Homes – Platte Chapel of Wheatland are in charge of the arrangements.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.gormanfh.com.

