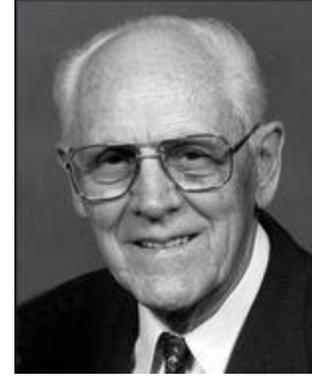


## Chester Harold Gausman

(November 26, 1915 - July 15, 2008)



Chester H. “Chet” Gausman, 92, died Tuesday, July 15, 2008, at Hospice House in Rapid City, S.D., after a brief battle with cancer.



He was born November 26, 1915, in Milford, Neb., to Bertha (Kemper) and John Gausman and grew up on the family farm near Milford. He graduated from Dorchester (Neb.) High School in 1933, and he attended normal school in order to teach in rural schools. He began his teaching career near Milford and continued at the Stauffer School, where he taught with his sister Dorothy (Gausman) Carlson. In 1940 he received a Bachelor of Science from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and became an elementary principal at Torrington, Wyo., where he met Mary E. Bastian, his future wife and a teacher at the school.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Chet tried to enlist in the military. Because of a sports injury, he had little vision in one eye and enlisted with the Merchant Marine and served in Boston. This wasn't the service he wanted, so he memorized the eye chart to get into the U.S. Marine Corps. He served in the South Pacific and Okinawa as a first lieutenant. He considered himself a Marine the rest of his life.

Chet and Lt. Mary E. Bastian were married on December 27, 1944, in Cheyenne, Wyo., shortly before he served overseas. They moved to Garland, Neb., in 1946, where Chet was the school superintendent and basketball coach.

He dedicated his life's work to the field of education, and with support from the GI Bill, he completed a Master of Education from the University of Wyoming in 1948. After receiving a Ford Foundation fellowship, he earned a Doctorate of Education from the University of Wyoming in 1955.

He taught at Lincoln High School in Lincoln, Neb., and was named director of vocational/adult education for Lincoln Public Schools.

In 1966 he became the founding president of Nebraska's Central Community College in Hastings, Neb. Under his direction, the college initiated the first self-paced instruction model; this model was adopted by more than 100 colleges throughout the United States and Canada. The college now serves more than 30,000 students in central Nebraska. He was a consultant to colleges across the nation and was a member of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation. He advised and served the educational community through memberships in many educational organizations.

In 1982 he worked with the United Nations in Amman, Jordan, helping to develop a community college system.

In 1984 he and Mary moved from Grand Island, Neb., to Custer, S.D., to a home designed and constructed by their sons, John and Hal. He was a Rotarian; a Mason; a member of the Custer

Community Church, where he served on many committees and boards; a member of Custer Library Board; and a volunteer and host at the 1881 Custer Courthouse Museum.

He was a Nebraska Cornhusker, win or lose, to the bone. He followed Big Red from spring practice to bowl games every year.

Family was a priority for him, and he was interested in the lives of his children and grandchildren. He was always there with support and advice.

Survivors include his wife, Mary, Custer; sons, John and Nancy Gausman, Custer, Hal Gausman and Adel Brown, Everett, Wash., daughter and husband, Kris and Harvey Harrington, Edgemont, S.D.; five grandchildren, Eric, Will and Gretchen Gosch, Ann VerHey and Jessica Gausman; and sister, Darlene Bastian, Edgemont.

He is preceded in death by his parents, John and Bertha Gausman; three brothers, Clarence, Floyd and Virgil Gausman; and three sisters, Ida Stallings, Lorene Moeller and Dorothy Carlson.

A celebration of his life will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday, July 26, at Custer Community Church, with the Rev. Ray Schatz and the Rev. Bill Comfort officiating.

There will be a memorial service Saturday, Nov. 29, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. at Lincoln Memorial Park chapel in Lincoln, Neb.

Memorial contributions can be made to Central Community College, Hastings, P.O. Box 1024, Hastings, NE 68902-1024 and to Custer Community Church, 547 Harney St., Custer, SD 57730. McColley's Chapels of the Hills in Custer is caring for arrangements.

Arrangements have been placed in the care of McColley's Chapel of the Hills in Custer. Written condolences can be made at [www.mccolleyschapels.com](http://www.mccolleyschapels.com).