

# Donald M. Harding

(December 20, 1924 - December 25, 2011)



As the family of Don comes to grip with their loss, they realize even more what an impact he had on their lives.

Donald Martin Harding passed away early Christmas Day. Christmas was his favorite Holiday, and he delighted in making Christmas special for his family, even during lean years. We still remember his made-up Christmas stories: “the moon was shining bright, and the snow was coming down...!!” Don and his wife Leona have four children. Donald Raymond (Anne) of Colorado Springs, Helen Irene Hallgren (Bob) of Lincoln, Nebraska, Donna Jean Cutler (Ed) of Hot Springs, and Robert George (Carol) of Edgemont, eleven grandchildren, and eight grandchildren. He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, who loved his family above all else.

Don was born on December 20, 1924 to Chloe and Ruth Harding. He spent most of his growing up years at the Sanitor near Custer where his father worked. There he became a proficient figure skater when the baseball field was transformed into a skating rink in the winter.

Don served in the European arena in WW II after his marriage to Leona Hammer. Upon returning from battle, he began his life-long career as an auto mechanic and service manager. He worked for George Campbell in the Custer Chevrolet garage until 1954 when he moved with Campbell to the Edgemont Chevy garage. Don and Leona took with them their four young children and embarked upon the establishment of their lives in Edgemont. All four children grew up and graduated from Edgemont High School. In his career as an auto mechanic, he was known as a kind, honest and knowledgeable expert in auto repair. He was known to help a stranded motorist any time of the day or night.

Don had a short stint as a guard at Igloo in the early 1960’s. After the kids grew up he worked for a few years at the Chevy garage in Custer, then returned to Edgemont as a parts man. Prior to retirement, Don worked as a diesel mechanic for Silver King Mines. After retirement, Don and Leona moved back to Custer where they were caretakers at Landover Estates. They were once again in their beloved Black Hills. In January of 2002 they moved into the South Dakota State Veterans Home in Hot Springs.

After Leona’s death in May of 2008, Don spent his final years in the Vet’s Home. It was evident to the whole family how much he was appreciated and cared for by those around him. The staff and fellow residents knew him as we know him...a very kind and caring man. He always had a smile on his face and a twinkle in his eye for the people who served him so very well. One employee recently said, “Don is one of my favorites; he is such a wonderful person.”

The family will miss their dad and granddad. We are thankful for the wealth of memories and good times with him. We are also thankful he no longer has to endure the physical pain brought on by his deteriorating health. We know he is now experiencing the true and pure everlasting peace and joy we all long for in Christ Jesus.

A memorial service is being held at the State Vet's Home on Friday, December 30 at 2 pm with Chaplain Loyd Nielson officiating. A second memorial service will be held in Hot Springs at a later date.

A memorial has been established to the Edgemont Community Church and the Fountain of Life Church in Hot Springs.

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