



Gary P. Miller

August 9, 1935 - October 28, 2003

Local Artist, Gary P. Miller, passed away October 28, 2003 after a courageous year and one-half battle with cancer. Services will be held at 10:00 AM Friday at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Mandan. Burial will be in St. Mary's Cemetery, Bismarck. Visitation will be from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM Thursday at Eastgate Funeral Service, Bismarck, where a vigil will be held at 7:00 PM. Gary was born August 9, 1935 at Washburn, ND to Leland and Mabel Miller. The family moved to various locations in the United States where his father was stationed in the military. They eventually moved to Bismarck where Gary completed high school and attended Bismarck Junior College. He and his wife Darla were high school sweethearts. Gary married the "love of his life" on June 14, 1954. They moved to Mandan where Gary worked as an operator at the AMOCO oil refinery for many years. In 1975 he retired from the refinery and devoted himself to his art full time. He and Darla opened Gary's Gallery in Bismarck. They opened a second gallery, Gary's Gallery II in Scottsdale, Arizona, which they operated from 1984 to 1997. Gary had a lifelong love of art and by age five was making sketches of animals, and space scenes including trips to Mars. He studied art in high school and college but was mostly self-taught. Gary touched the memories of America in his paintings; whether of Arizona landscapes, rural North Dakota scenes, dramatic churches, weather worn homesteads, mountain men, prairie wildlife, and most recently Lewis and Clark. Gary gained national prominence in the field of art. He was recognized for the authenticity of his work, which was the result of

thorough detail and research on any given subject. His paintings and illustrations of rural life, depicting the past and present, have appeared in magazines, calendars, private collections and galleries throughout the nation. He also received numerous honors and awards. In 1982 the Old West Trail Foundation presented Gary with the "William F. Cody Award" for portraying rural America in his paintings. Last year the Bismarck/Mandan Chamber of Commerce honored Gary and presented him with a plaque for twenty years of providing the art for the annual Folkfest buttons. He received the Bismarck Art and Galleries Association's Citation Award in 1996. In 2003 the State of North Dakota Certificate for Lifetime Achievement Award was given to Gary in recognition of his outstanding contributions in the visual arts. This award was presented by first lady Mikey Hoven. Gary's art earned wide exposure to the art world. He has been featured in Southwest Art, U.S. Art, and American Artists of Renown as well as many other publications. Gary was commissioned by the North Dakota Automobile Association to paint a series of china collector plates, one of which included his work of Lawrence Welk on his homestead near Strasburg, North Dakota. He was also commissioned to paint a picture of the northern border pipeline. He presented a print of the pipeline to then vice-president George H.W. Bush during his visit to North Dakota to dedicate the completed pipeline. Last year Gary completed a series of three Lewis and Clark paintings and this year a painting of the Saint Joseph Church in Mandan. Gary was a charter member of the Steam Artists of America in Sedona, AZ. He was a life member of the Elks Club and served with the North Dakota National Guard. Paintings by Gary hang in private and permanent collections throughout the United States as well as in the North Dakota Governor's office. In Gary and Darla's belief of making art affordable to everyone, he painted the N.D. Bicentennial Series of posters in 1989. Gary was a very compassionate and kind person. He adored his wife Darla and loved to spend time with their children and grandchildren. Next to his family he loved North Dakota and strived to tell the story on canvas of a fading era. To Gary, each old building, piece of farm equipment, train, boat, gun, antique car

had a lot of history. Gary sketched and studied each item and tried to tell its story. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends, and patrons. Although he was a private person, he and his loving partner Darla enjoyed bringing his art to the public. Gary's passion for art and North Dakota will continue at Gary's Gallery through Darla and with the help of their son Keenan. Gary is survived by his wife Darla of 49 years; his sons Dana and Susan Miller of Littleton, CO, Keenan Miller and Tammy Dewall of Mandan, ND, Kent and Lisa Miller of Scottsdale, AZ, and Garret Miller of Englewood, CO; his daughter Kara Ritzagel and her fiancé Ray Nichols of Inver Grove Heights, MN, his grandchildren, Nicole, Morgan, Derek, Dallas, Keaton, Brock, Rachel and Ryan; his brothers Deane and Arlene Miller of Bismarck and James and Marie Miller of Phoenix, AZ; and one sister Gloria and Ralph Boehm of California. He was preceded in death by his parents.

Tribute Wall

JM

“ *I miss my brother Gary very much.*

James N. Miller - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

WR

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with Gary's family at this time. We didn't know him personally, but we are so proud to own and display some of his fine work. His memory will live on forever. Walter & Oleeta Rime*

Walter & Oleeta Rime - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM

EL

“ *We were sorry to hear of Gary's passing away and would like to offer our condolences. He left the world a better place and that is all any of us can ask for. Evan is not feeling well so we were unable to attend. God be with you all.*

Evan E & Marilyn O'Leary Lips - March 17, 2015 at 12:00 AM