



Ken Douglas

December 9, 1941 - December 29, 2014

Normal- Ken Douglas, 73, of Normal, passed away December 29, 2014 resting comfortably in his residence following a battle with cancer. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Illinois State University Foundation. Please note in the memo line account 462-5457, The Autism Place.

Ken had a full life in which he was known for his integrity, honesty, fairness, clear reasoning and generosity, traits that rewarded him with fast and lasting friends no matter where he traveled. He was a successful farmer and a loyal family man, and made sacrifices as a dependable man who always put the welfare of loved ones before his own.

Born in Lincoln IL Dec 9, 1941, two days after the invasion of Pearl Harbor, Ken quickly grew into a hard and determined farmer with a special love for Angus cattle. He was spending his days in the field on a tractor by the age of 9, with his labor broken each summer by long periods of showing cattle at state and county fairs, which gave him a lifetime of pleasurable stories to tell. Growing up participating in 4-H and FFA, Ken grew a special talent for judging cattle, and continued to do so in college at Illinois State University. His love of Angus never left him, and he would sit and watch cattle auctions on television even within a week of his death. Despite some tempting offers to have a life in the cattle industry, his loyalty was with the family farm in Mason City, IL where

he farmed with his father Ray and brother Donald before finally retiring from farming at the age of 62.

Ken was a dedicated family man, who met his wife Luann in high school and remained a loyal husband for over 51 years to the time of his death. He and Luann raised two sons, Brett and Jeff, and were as devoted to parenting as to their marriage. Even when busy in the fields, Ken rarely missed a chance to attend baseball games and would not reject a request to shoot baskets at the rickety hoop standing before the cattle lot, where a badly missed shot held special hazards. Ken took great joy in his five grandchildren and made enormous sacrifices for their benefit. Whether it was for his wife, children, or grandchildren, Ken was always thinking of others and provided endless enriching experiences that they will always cherish. Not the least among them were the many fishing adventures he led.

Ken began fishing as a very young boy, running a spinner along brush in Prairie Creek and Sugar Creek catching smallmouth bass. This simple introduction was a gateway to his ever expanding scope on the sport. His adventures included “hogging” giant flathead catfish, which was always a questionable behavior considering his inability to swim. More civilized fishing included trolling northern lakes for walleye and pike, reeling in massive halibut in Alaska, and surf fishing in the Gulf of Mexico. If he had a specialty it would be fishing for largemouth bass in lakes and ponds, and he was always a generous and gracious fishing partner.

His graciousness and his interest in others was readily obvious and led to a wealth of remarkable friends. By the time he left Mason City he knew half the town, but his deep friendships continued to form until his death. Whether it was pulling into the Fast Stop in Astoria, going on a charter boat adventure off South Padre Island, or having an early breakfast with the Times Past Inn crowd in Bloomington, he was always delighted to see his friends.

Ken was preceded in death by his parents, Velma and Ray Douglas, and one brother, Donald Douglas. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Luann Douglas, his two sons Brett (Iris) and Jeff (Tien) Douglas, brother Melvin (Marilyn) Douglas, and sister, Linda (Russ) Lockenour. Also surviving are grandchildren Austin, Christopher, Jacqueline, James, and Audrey, as well as Melissa Watson who has been close to Ken and his family since their move to Normal, and was like a daughter to him.

Though a multitude of people have made such a great impact on Ken and his family throughout Ken's life, a few special people and organizations who were critically important in his final years bear mentioning: the entire staff of the OSF Cancer Center for their expertise and warm care, the OSF Home Care Services Hospice staff who made his final weeks pass in comfort, and family and friends whose concern was uplifting and heartfelt. In addition, Ken and his family are grateful to the many clinicians and therapists, many of whom were ISU students, who worked diligently to care for and educate his grandson Christopher Douglas.

A visitation for Ken will be held on January 2, 2015 at Hurley Funeral Home in Mason City from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Cremation rites have been accorded. A private family burial will be at a later date. Hurley Funeral Home in Mason City is assisting the family with the arrangements. Online memorial messages can be left for the family at www.hurleyfh.com.

Tribute Wall



“ *Ken Douglas*

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