



## MERRILL ERNST DETERS

March 5, 1939 - July 26, 2020

Merrill Ernst Deters enjoyed his last cup of coffee on Sunday morning, July 26th. He was born March 5th, 1939, the only child to Martin and Ruth (Meyer) Deters. He spent his childhood years on the family farm near Caledonia, MN. In time he would share his life as a third generation farmer with his wife, the late Mary (Kallis) Deters and their daughter Tonya.

Growing up, Merrill enjoyed his summers on the farm with his cousin Bill. The two grew very close and considered themselves brothers. Fishing and hunting with friends became a common past-time. In high school, Merrill was involved in FFA, chorus, band, and served as vice president of his senior class. After graduating from Caledonia High School, Merrill attended the School of Agriculture at the University of Minnesota in St. Paul. He then returned to the family farm where he would make farming his lifelong career.

Along with his many seasons of deer hunting and numerous fishing trips to South Dakota, Merrill found enjoyment in snowmobiling, ice fishing, bowling and playing golf. He was known for his deep singing voice and along with three close friends formed a singing quartet known as "The Four Dads".

Merrill's love and dedication for his community was apparent to anyone who knew him. He was a charter member of the Eitzen Lions Club, held various officer positions during his 40 plus years of service, and received the Melvin Jones Fellow Award; recognizing his humanitarian work as a Lion. He was an active member of the Caledonia Rotary Club and Houston County Fair Board. He served on the church council at St. Luke's United Church of Christ in Eitzen and was in the choir for over 50 years. Merrill shared his defined voice and zest for life during the annual Fourth of July celebration in Eitzen as he announced each entry in the parade and later sang the National Anthem before the fireworks display.

In his later years, Merrill retired from farming and moved to Caledonia with his wife Mary. Each morning he enjoyed coffee with friends at the Redwood Cafe in Caledonia. It was there at the "round table" where all of life's problems could be solved. Merrill spent the last year and a half of his life in Memory Care at Claddagh Senior Living in Caledonia. It was a

perfect fit for him as he found a new community of friends while being provided with immeasurable care and love. He is survived by his daughter Tonya, son-in-law Shawn Johnston and grandchildren Ian, Carter and Maya of Rochester, Minnesota.

Throughout his life Merrill touched the lives of many people. He lived life to the fullest; you knew when he walked into the room. He will forever be remembered as someone who exemplified kindness, humility and a genuine heart.

Visitation for Merrill will be from 2 to 6 pm on Sunday, August 2, at St. Luke's Church, Eitzen. A Memorial service will be at 7 pm on Monday, August 3rd, at St. Luke's Church, and interment will follow in St. Lukes Cemetery.

Memorials are preferred to the Claddagh Senior Living, Caledonia.

# Events

---

**AUG** **Visitation**02:00PM - 06:00PM

**2**

---

ST. LUKE'S CHURCH  
HWY 76, EITZEN, MN, US

**AUG** **Memorial Service**07:00PM

**3**

---

ST. LUKE'S CHURCH  
HWY 76, EITZEN, MN, US

# Comments

---



“ We will always remember the times we watched the Viking or Packer games, We shared lots of time together, including Community Theatre in LoCrosse and s few bus rides. We will miss you, Merrill, and always remember your sunny disposition and singing in the choir with you. See you agin soon, Pat and Kathryn Bailey

**Pat & Kthryn Bailey** - August 01 at 07:28 PM