



Roger Van Gorp

January 19, 1937 - December 24, 2020

Roger Allen Van Gorp 83 of Rockwell City (Twin Lakes) formally from Des Moines was takeniw by Jesus to his heavenly home on December 24, 2020, to celebrate Christmas at Jesus' table. Jesus rescued him from his suffering with kidney failure. Praise The Lord!

Roger was born in Des Moines on January 19, 1937. He was adopted at 6 weeks by Raymond and Dorothy (Webster) Van Gorp and raised to be a farmer. He started as a young child on the tractor and helping Dad farm, as a youth milking cows and delivering milk to AE Dairy before school-often late-and bailing hay to get in shape for football. He graduated from Bondurant High School in 1955, where he enjoyed sports, but not school work. After graduation he enjoyed playing on the local and the church baseball teams and also refereed different youth and high school basketball games.

For several years he farmed in Madrid, Iowa but his Dad wanted to cut back so that farm was sold and he returned to the home place. He married Nina Ann Schmidt July 8, 1968 in Holstein, Iowa,

He had a large cow-calf operation and farmed over 1000 acres of corn and soy beans.

In 1979, Roger raised sweet corn to sell at farmers markets; and then in 1980, he started truck gardening under the name of V-7 Produce (his cattle brand). Fresh produce, including strawberries, sweet corn, pumpkins (from a large you-pick patch) was sold at the homestead; as well as sweet corn and pumpkins at the markets. Hundreds of chickens and turkeys were raised and sold as fresh dressed. Small and large groups of kids toured the farm in the spring to see the baby farm animals and were given and planted green bean seeds to take home and grow. Groups would come in the fall to see the growing animals and pick pumpkin gourds to take home.

Roger joined the Volunteer Delaware Township Fire/Rescue Department after a fire at the homeplace. Later, as the rescue captain, he upgraded the level of care to an EMT1 level. That training led Roger to part-time employment with LifeLine Rescue as an EMT1 and relief driver. He enjoyed helping people in all types of situations.

His Des Moines home was always an open door welcoming strangers off Interstate 80 if broken down, or in storms, or anyone needed help. Youth groups would hang out there for pizza, ice cream and games, or just talking. Sunday School classes enjoyed sweet corn feeds or potluck suppers, card games with classmates or friends, and lots of dominoes. He loved and enjoyed people of all ages telling his stories and/or having fellowship. The Twin Lakes cabin (known as Idiot's Delight) bought in 1969 also had a revolving door with many friends, company picnics, and the church youth groups activities. Very few weekends were quiet ones but water sports, wild card games, and fellowship was always welcomed and enjoyed. The cabin slept 22 in beds and many weekends they were filled.

After leaving the farm in 1990, he began mowing lawns (I don't think I ever saw him mow lawn before that) and mostly outside odd jobs. He succeeded keeping very busy until his major brain bleed in 2011.

Roger had been a team player in many roles. After marrying Nina, they took 2 mission trips to Quito, Ecuador, to work on a church addition and encourage Carlos and Karen Feijoo and family. On the second trip, they worked to clean up grounds for the Covenant Bible College of Ecuador.

He was active player for Medicine for Mali, Africa, in its early years. Roger and Nina served for two weeks in five successive years to the Malians in rural villages. Months were spent planning, gathering material and packing needed supplies. Besides medical work, water lines and faucets were laid to different areas of the village and to the school. Another year Medicine for Mali provided 500 baby chicks to the villagers so Roger constructed portable chicken pens. Other years he helped and encouraged the farmers, and painted buildings. Roger was always visiting with the men and playing or entertaining the kids, lending a hand wherever needed all without learning the French or village language.

Roger and Nina went to Dubai, UAE, to encourage and have fellowship with Danie and Lori Splett family. Several cruises were taken to see God's creation in many Caribbean Islands as well as trips to California, Florida, several Hawaiian Islands, Arkansas, and the Gulf coast. His favorite trips were to Cozumel, Mexico, where he was Papa Roger to Carlos and Norma and their extended families. Many trips since 1980 were/are so special, as we continue to talk and email frequently to Carlos and Norma.

Roger had been an active member of the Evangelical Covenant Church of Des Moines (now known as The Well). He served on the church board, ushered, and worked many years with the youth group. Since moving to Twin Lakes permanently in 2013, he became

a member of the Pomeroy Evangelical Covenant church north of Pomeroy. Roger has been known to kids, young and old, as the "Candy Man". He loved and adored kids and they loved him, or at least, loved the candy. LOL

Roger and Nina were active in projects at Twin Lakes Bible Camp, such as stripping the dining hall floor, putting in a brick walkway to Swede Bend Church, and organizing and building of split rail fencing around much of the camp grounds.

Roger tried to be the rough, tough guy but to those who knew him well, he was a "teddy bear" with a heart of gold. He would give you the shirt off his back, or the \$100 bill from his billfold, if you needed it.

Roger will be greatly missed by his wife Nina of over 53 years, his grandson Jake (Kristin) Van Gorp and granddaughter Ginger Swensen, great grandchildren Grady, Addison, and Breckin Van Gorp, extended family and a host of friends.

There will be a celebration of his life and shared memories Saturday January 16th at 1:30pm at Pomeroy Covenant Church 5 miles north of Pomeroy on Hwy 4.

Cemetery

Holstein Cemetery

Holstein, IA,

Comments



“ Dear Nina and the Van Gorp Family,
I am sorry to hear of Roger's passing, and send my sincere condolences and warmest wishes for peace. I have many fond memories of times spent with Roger and the Medicine for Mali crew. He was a kind soul, and generous. He will be missed.
With love,
Elise DeVore Berlan

Elise D Berlan - January 05 at 09:12 PM



“ Thank you, Elise. Those years packing and going to Mali where special times and I miss not going. Roger told many stories about Mali. How are you and the family? I'm doing good - at peace knowing Roger is without suffering and in heaven either family and friends worshipping our Savior.

Nina - January 11 at 08:07 AM



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with all of your family at this time. Gregg's Dad passed away in August and we understand the loss/yet relief feelings. It is such a loss for all who knew Roger and had memories of him and yet such sweet relief of heaven. We don't wish them back. You both were a blessing during our time at TLCC and your friendship means a lot. Our love to you!

Gregg & Cheryl Peterson & Family

Gregg & Cheryl Peterson - January 04 at 01:46 PM



“ Thank you for your kind words and the memories of you and the family. Sorry for your loss also, I didnt know. Blessings for 2021

Nina - January 05 at 09:02 AM



“ I pray for comfort from the Holy Spirit for you, Nina, and your family. I have such fond memories of you and Roger at church(ECov) and on the missions trips that we took together. He was such a loving man and I'm glad to have known him. May the peace of the Lord be always with you.-Stacie Johnson (Parlee)

Stacie - December 30, 2020 at 08:53 PM



“ Thank you so much Stacie. I remember those trips too. You were a trooper with us older folks!! More cemento!!

Nina - January 01 at 09:30 PM



“ Nina, I am saddened by your loss of dear Roger. His obituary reminded me of so many good times with Medicine for Mali. He did so much good for for so many people all over the earth. What a tribute to his character. Thank you for sharing him with us.
-Jill DeVore

Jill DeVore - December 30, 2020 at 02:55 PM



“ Those were some great trips and packing was such fellowship too.

Nina - January 01 at 09:31 PM



“ Dear Nina and family, we were so sorry to hear of Roger passing away, but we find great hope knowing that he loved his Lord and is home with Jesus. Our last memory was sitting with Roger and Nina, visiting with them in their Twin Lakes home, a few years ago. There was always warm hospitality wherever Roger and Nina were. We extend our sincere sympathy to Nina and family. We will remember Roger always, fondly.

Sincerely,
Dave and Diane Way

Dave and Diane Way - December 29, 2020 at 10:18 PM



“ Thank you we always loved to have company and have fun chatting. Roger always had a story to tell or more!! Miss you

Nina - January 01 at 09:35 PM



“ Nina: I was so sorry to learn of Roger's passing. I have so many memories of you and Roger as our next door neighbors at Twin Lakes. We could always count on Roger to provide a good story or two. You were generous and kind neighbors, and I'm happy you got to enjoy your beautiful home on the lake together for many years. My thoughts are with you during this difficult time.
Pegg (Willis) Havens

Margaret (Pegg) Havens - December 29, 2020 at 12:39 PM



“ Such good times. Loved your family too. Great neighbors
Nina - December 29, 2020 at 07:56 PM



“ Nina, We give thanks to God for knowing Roger is now completely healed and at home with Jesus! May the Lord's presence bring you both peace and comfort during this time. John & Charlotte Shelley

John & Charlotte Shelley - December 29, 2020 at 08:12 AM



“ Thank you. I have that unbelievable peace only prayer and God can give.
Nina - December 29, 2020 at 08:03 PM



“ A beautiful obituary. Many fond memories of Roger and very thankful for his friendship. He will be missed. I love that he got to spend Christmas with Jesus!

Ryan - December 28, 2020 at 10:38 PM



“ That was my Christmas wish for him to go home to Jesus for Christmas and be without the suffering.
Nina - December 29, 2020 at 08:05 PM



“ I am very sorry of the passing of Roger - Memories from the visits at Twin Lakes and the V-7 produce in Des Moines. Loved to hear his stories.

Carl W Brown - December 28, 2020 at 08:04 AM



“ Great visiting with you tonight. He had lots of stories to tell!!! You were a great friend for him.

Nina - December 29, 2020 at 08:17 PM



“ You and Roger are like my second parents. I wouldn't be the person I am today without all the time I spent with Roger. He was always teaching and sharing his wisdom. Whenever I had a problem with anything he was always there to help me. If I messed something up while working with him he never got upset but lovingly took the time to teach me. His friendship and love has meant the world to me.

Brian Wenell - December 27, 2020 at 03:50 PM



“ Brian, you have always been a special guy to both Roger and me. I remember many memories but just now I remember how he tried to give you \$100 on your wedding day to run away or something like that. Of course he was so happy for you and Angie. Love you

Nina - December 29, 2020 at 08:10 PM



“ Beautiful obituary that describes Roger so well! he loved Jesus and others so well. I affectionately called him “Clod” as he would play jokes such as wrapping up a clod of dirt for me. Roger was a talker and a jokester but also was a deep man who was the “teddy bear” that would be there at a moment's notice. Thank you Nina for being the beautiful wife to him too. Love you! Lynn .

Lynn Bennink Vermillion - December 27, 2020 at 03:14 PM



“ And all those suppers and dominoes games. You deserved that clod Roger-said do you still have it?? LOL

Nina - December 29, 2020 at 08:13 PM



“ Nina, so few words can express the sorrow yet joy of Roger leaving this earth and entering his heavenly reward. I will always remember his kindness in visiting my father in his last days on earth. Those visits really brought a light to my dad’s day. Praying for God to comfort you as you move through the grief of earthly loss. God bless you.



Sandra Earixson - December 27, 2020 at 11:09 AM



“ Such kind words Sandra. He really enjoyed your dad too. I do have a great peace so I'm good.

Nina - December 29, 2020 at 08:15 PM



“ Nina-Bruce and I are so sorry to hear of Roger’s passing. We have so many fond memories of both of you from our years in Pleasant Hill, but one that I’m sure none of us will ever forget is our very first meeting when my car ended up in your yard. I was mortified and you were both so kind, while probably wondering about the crazy new neighbor! You were the most generous, wonderful neighbors one could ask for, and we cherish the wonderful memories we have of both of you. With sincere sympathy, Bruce and Annette Spates

annette spates - December 27, 2020 at 09:41 AM



“ We loved having you as neighbors such good times and the dogs were good together also. And trying to "shoot" your diabetic cat when you were gone. Trying to outdo each other with Christmas outside decorations. Out trip to FI to visit. Great memories. Miss you

Nina - December 29, 2020 at 08:21 PM



“ Nina and family,

Rick and I have fond memories when you had us over to your home. We are sorry to hear Roger is no longer here and rejoicing that one day we will be together.

Rick and Deanne

Deanne Johnson - December 26, 2020 at 09:50 PM



“ Nina. I'm sorry but pleased to hear of Rogers promotion . No more suffering for him. PTL. Sharon kept me up to date on his health. I read the nice obituary, it fit him well. I hope you're doing OK, you're a strong lady. God is good & will keep you safe. I have fond memories of the past .
Marilyn Paine

marilyn paine - December 29, 2020 at 03:04 PM



“ Nina, so sorry to hear of Roger's passing. Absent from the body to be present with the Lord. It is our comfort at the time of our loved ones entering eternity. All our love and prayers for you and the family.
Remembering all the good times we had together.
Keith & Sheryl Miller

Sheryl Miller - December 29, 2020 at 03:36 PM



“ We did have some great times together. And we will meet again in glory land

Nina - December 29, 2020 at 08:23 PM