

Richard Dea, 88

Dec. 30, 1915 - July 23, 2004

AVOCA — Richard W. Dick Dea was born Dec. 30, 1915, to William B. and Cecelia H. Dargin Dea at Lane Farm in Pleasant Township, Pottawattamie County. He entered Shelby Consolidated School in the fall of 1920 and graduated in the spring of 1933. During high school, Dick played four years of varsity basketball, three years of baseball and played one year in the school band. He made the All-County basketball team his senior year. In the summer of 1933, Dick started working at the Farmer's Savings Bank in Shelby, and worked at home for room and board. For 10 years he played on Shelby's town basketball team.

Dick married Esther M. Paul at the home of Father V.D. Cashman in Avoca, June 14, 1939. Their first child, Donna Eileen, was born in 1942, a month before Dick enlisted in the United States Navy during World War II. He went to boot camp in Great Lakes, IL before attending radio school at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He then spent two years duty at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in Naval Communications. He was discharged in October of 1945 in Norman, OK. Dick started farming in 1946 when he moved to a farm two miles south of Avoca, where he would live the rest of his life. His second child Kathleen Mary, was born in 1947. Dick purchased the farm from his father in 1950 and added the other place in 1956. He clerked auction sales for Farmer's Savings Bank and Citizen's Savings Bank, and the Avoca Auction Company from its inception until its closing in 1998. Two years after his son, William Franklin, was born in 1954, he returned to the business world as an officer and director of the Citizen's Savings Bank until it sold in 1969. With Esther's help as a co-farmer the couple kept their farming operation until 1981, when their son-in-law, Tom Pattee, started farming. He was a lifetime member of St. Mary's Catholic Church. He served as a councilman for the town of Shelby. He was a longtime Farm Bureau member, holding all committee offices, including president. He represented Iowa as a voting delegate at the Bureau's national convention in Phoenix and attended conventions in Hawaii, St. Louis, Kansas City, Chicago, Atlanta and Orlando. He served as secretary-treasurer for the Newtown-Avoca Historical Society and as secretary-treasurer for the AVOHA quarterback club for 15 years. Dick was a member of the American Legion starting in 1946. He also belonged to Carsten's 1880 farmstead from its beginning. He called bingo for the last 15 years at the Avoca Nursing Home.

He was well traveled. He has journeyed across the Atlantic three times, visiting Northern and Southern Europe (Finland, Germany, Belgium, Italy) and the British Isles. He has flown to Hawaii and sailed the coast of Alaska. Dick voyaged around the tip of South America from Chile to Argentina. He has traveled through Mexico, Ecuador, Columbia and ventured through Central America by way of the Panama Canal. In 1995, Dick spent a few weeks in New Zealand and Australia's Outback. In addition to this (and his stay in Cuba), he has traveled to each of this country's 50 states. His last journey took him, Esther, Kathleen and Tom and Bill and Sondra to Ireland, the home of his ancestors. There they attended the 2002 O Dea Clan reunion in Ennis. They also visited the boyhood home of Dick's grandfather, John Dea, near Cappawhite in Tipperary County. He died in the Atlantic Nursing and Rehab Center in Atlantic, July 23, 2004, at age 88 years, six months and 23 days.

Dick was preceded in death by his parents; his brothers, Robert, James and Donald Dea; and his sister, Cecelia Graeve. He is survived by his wife, Esther, of Avoca; daughter, Donna (Ed) Garrett of Pleasant Dale, NE; daughter, Kathleen (Thomas) Pattee of Avoca; son, William Dea (Sondra) of Avoca; grandchildren, Thomas Krohn (Kris) of Fort Walton Beach, FL; William Pattee (Amy) of Avoca; Michael Pattee of Avoca; Tamara Garrett of Cincinnati, OH; Quincy Dea (Lea Anne) of Belgrade, MT; Jana (Jeff) Schmitz of Aberdeen, SD; Patrick Dea of Minneapolis, MN; Franklin Dea of Brookings, SD; great-grandchildren, Nathan, Ryan and Evan Pattee; Kaitlyn Lott; Thomas, Jennie and Dustin Krohn; brother, John Dea (Helen) of Shelby; sister, Mary Zimmerman of Council Bluffs; sister-in-law, Beverly Dea of Shelby; brother-in-law, Eugene Graeve (Janette) of Omaha, NE; nieces, nephews and other relatives. Knutson Funeral Chapel in Avoca in charge of arrangements.

A funeral Mass was held July 27, 2004, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Avoca, with Father John Frost officiating. Burial was in the Graceland Cemetery in Avoca. Honorary casket bearers were Kim Buck, Herb Rock, Gene Mohr, Betty Wendelin, Dick Holtz, Ruth Davis, Orvie Fischer, Max Klindt, Lloyd and Gladys Petersen, Harley and Caroline Spencer, Bernice and Lorraine Mann, Dick and Phyllis Sievers, Dave and Kelly Thies, Gary Wendelin, Marlys Hutzell and Joe Davis III. Casket bearers were Thomas Krohn, Michael Pattee, Patrick Dea, William Pattee, Quincy Dea and Franklin Dea. Knutson Family Chapel in Avoca in charge of arrangements.