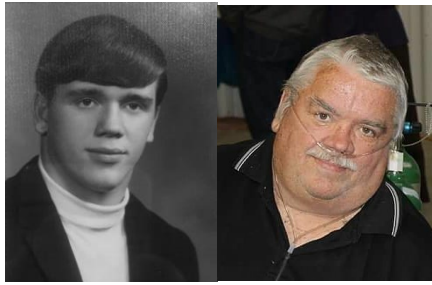


## In Memory of Daniel Jack Converse



Scottsbluff, Nebraska – Daniel Jack Converse, known by most simply as Dan, died at the age of 69 on Friday, February 14, 2020. He was born on October 6, 1950, in Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska to Jack and Dorothy (Sherman) Converse of rural Mitchell, Nebraska. Dan was the second oldest of five children. His mother often commented about how ornery he was as a child, saying that even though she made him sit down, she could tell he was still standing up on the inside. He was known to climb the tallest tree, swinging from its branches, and then yell for his mother to come see his stunts making her cringe with his antics. Dan and his brothers were also known for reinforcing old cars for daring stunts. Whether it was seeing how fast they could turn without rolling the car, driving it off the edge of the irrigation ditch near their house to see how many times it would roll, or daring how fast and how far they could drive in reverse, Dan had a zest for life.

Dan attended school in Mitchell and was very active in sports, setting several school records. He drove a black Studebaker that he painted a red heart on the doors of and used black electrical tape to put his dates names in the heart. If the hearts were empty, everyone knew he was available. He graduated from Mitchell High School in 1969. After graduation, Dan left the family farm where he helped his father and brothers plant, harvest, and care for the animals and went to Denver, Colorado, where he attended Western Technical College to become a Certified Mechanic. Daniel Jack married Gloria Chaffin on March 27, 1970, in Holyoke, Colorado. To this union, two daughters (Roxanne and Melanie) were born.

In 1972, Daniel Jack was drafted into the army. After basic training, he was sent directly to the Vietnam War as a helicopter crew chief, where he saw active combat. He was stationed for a time at Fort Bragg in North Carolina upon his return. He was awarded a National Defense Service Medal, a Vietnam Service Medal, and a Vietnam Campaign Medal for his time of service. Dan was very proud of his service to his country and his part of the Converse legacy. That legacy included having one member of the family serve in each conflict from the Revolutionary War to Vietnam. After two years of service, Dan returned to civilian life.

Dan lived in many places during the course of his life and held many jobs including Hospital Maintenance, Ranch Hand, Irrigation Specialist, Lake Minatare Water Management, Enterprise Irrigation Ditch Manager, and County Grader Operator to name a few. Dan was very talented in many ways and could fix, wire, weld, and finagle anything into whatever he wanted it to be. He was known for saying, “I can fix anything but a broken heart, and that I can make feel better.”

Dan loved his quotes and his stories. One could often hear him saying “I have a one-track mind, and it’s derailed most of the time.” “Be good and have fun, if you can’t do both, make sure you

at least have fun.” Or, “No rest for the wicked, and the righteous don’t need any.” He was very proud of the fact that he had memorized the entire poem of “Two Dead Boys” by Tyler Rager, and apparently that was a family thing as many of his brothers also knew it.

After the end of his first marriage, Dan married Elaine Houser in 1989. Elaine had two older children (Dan and Brenda). After their marriage, Daniel Jack moved his family from Holyoke, Colorado, back to his roots near Mitchell, Nebraska. This marriage ended in 1994.

Dan loved his horses. ‘Dancer Dan’ was his prize stallion, and his dream was to have registered breeding stock with the American Paint Horse Association. Other than being able to ‘jimmy rig’ anything he needed to, Dan also enjoyed stock car racing, motorcycles, softball, football, and camping. In his later years, his mobile home was a source of pride and enjoyment for him.

Dan was a member of the Holyoke Lion’s Club, and eventually even served as president. He spent many summer nights at the ball fields either playing in a league or working the concessions stand. He was an EMT for several years and also served on the Enterprise Irrigation board in Scottsbluff. Dan was well known in each community he lived in and was always willing to lend a helping hand. He was generous, charismatic, and loyal.

In April of 1997, Dan married Elsie Hendren. Elsie had two children (Dael and Jimmy) that Dan accepted as his own. In his later years, he enjoyed the small farm west of Scottsbluff, where he had many chickens, geese, ducks, kittens and rabbits. He enjoyed having his grandchildren visit. He loved to watch and take pictures of the birds from his big window. Grandpa Dan (Papa) is remembered for his cake and cookie decorating, golf cart rides and mini race track.

Daniel Jack is survived by his first wife, Gloria Makey of Gothenburg, Ne; his second wife, Elaine Houser-Hart of Mitchell, Ne; and his current wife of almost 23 years, Elsie Hendren-Converse. Daughters: Roxanne Converse-Whiting of Gothenburg, Ne and Melanie (Marion) Schlatter of Lebanon, Ks; step-daughter Dael Hendren (James Nielsen) of Scottsbluff, Ne. Grandchildren: Kimberly (Alex) Jorgenson of Lincoln, Ne, AJ Whiting of Omaha, Ne, Tyler Whiting of Gothenburg, Ne; Abigail, Nathan, Jonathan, Ethan, Zachary, and Asher Schlatter of Lebanon, Ks; Elsianne and Conlan Nielsen of Scottsbluff, Ne. Brothers: David (Carrie) Converse and Daryl (Patti) Converse of Mitchell, Ne; Sister: Jeanette (Gary) Gorman of Scottsbluff, Ne.; as well as many cousins, nephews, nieces, and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Jack and Dorothy; his younger brother, Dean Converse; his step-son, Jimmy Hendren; and a granddaughter, Sarah Grace Schlatter.

A celebration of Daniel Jack’s life was held on February 28, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. at the St. Francis Episcopal Church in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, followed by the interment of his ashes at the Mitchell City Cemetery north of Mitchell, Nebraska. Dan received a full military burial with the Final Salute given by the Army National Guard and the Gering American Legion Post #36. Arrangements were handled by Bridgman Funeral Home in Scottsbluff and memorials went to the Wounded Warrior Project.