

GEORGE WOOLSEY, JR.

March 31, 1936 ~ November 3, 2022 (age 86)

A funeral service for George Woolsey, Jr., 86, will be held at 1:00 P.M. on Thursday, December 1, 2022 at the First Christian Church in Wheatland, Wyoming with Pastor Casey Schroeder officiating. Inurnment will follow at the Wheatland Cemetery.

George passed away on Thursday, November 3, 2022 at his home in Wheatland. He was born on Tuesday, March 31, 1936 in Wheatland, the son of George Woolsey Sr. and Mae I. (Barrett) Woolsey. He attended the Axford Country School at what is now the corner of Hightower Road and State Highway 34, approximately a one mile walk from his dad's farm. Then he finished his eighth-grade education in Wheatland. He learned to drive a tractor at six years old and was helping run a threshing machine before age 10. This evolved into his love for tractors, namely the John Deere brand, and attributed to his keen sense of how to run and fix farm equipment. By the age of 12, he had developed a lifelong love of hunting due to experiences of it with his dad and grandpa, C.V. Woolsey. George had hunted deer with them near Sand Creek and in the hills behind his dad's farm. By age 14, he was trailing cattle for his uncles, Al and Hubert Barrett, from Wheatland to their place on the Laramie Plains. This was his first introduction to the Antelope Basin, a place he would pass through on the way. He had his first encounter with the Sturgeons who ranched there. At the time he had no way of knowing that he would spend many years operating and loving the ranch life there. He then temporarily departed from farm and ranch life by age 18 to work several construction jobs, first near Cheyenne, then at Beacon Hill by what is now El Rancho, and finally at Teapot Dome. There he learned to drive a CAT by necessity. Fully loaded cement trucks needed pulled up a steep hill, and the man who ordinarily ran it was absent. The boss asked the hand crew if anyone could run such a machine and George's friend spoke up declaring "farmer boy can". George fired it up and ran it without a second thought. After a year there, he returned to ranching and farming for the rest of his life. He worked on a ranch near Manville, Wyoming doing cowboy work and putting up hay with a team of horses. A year passed and he returned to helping his dad at the farm southwest of Wheatland.

George met Alice (Smith) Sturgeon at the Ramona Theater. She was a hard-working widow scraping by on her own place northwest of town. Alice enjoyed George's company every Saturday at the theater, and they married on March 19, 1968. George, Alice, and Alice's son, William, were instantly a family and George was the only one William ever called "Dad". The three of them lived just across the road from George's dad's farm, and in 1970, Robert was born. They all then moved to the Bob Sturgeon Ranch near Garrett, Wyoming in the fall of 1971. George worked for Bob for a few years and ultimately took over operations after Bob passed away. In the meantime, Irene was born in 1975.

George spent 19 years on the ranch being a cowboy, tending livestock, putting up hay, hunting, and guiding deer hunters. These were his favorite times as he was doing everything he loved. Around 1990, he and Alice would spend summers at the ranch and winter cattle and sheep on Alice's place in Wheatland. He also farmed for Ernie Douglas for many years, though he really enjoyed coming up to the ranch as often as possible, as he was a cowboy at heart. Later he enjoyed irrigating the hayfield, training horses, spending time with his grandchildren who all lovingly referred to him as "Papa", tending his livestock and dogs, and visiting with friends and neighbors, as well as being a regular member of the First Christian Church.

He was preceded in death by his dad, George Woolsey Sr, on November 30, 1973; mom, Mae Woolsey on December 6, 1996; brother, Wood Vincent Woolsey, on May 29, 1932; sisters, Virginia Norris on October 12, 2017 and Janice Nagel on February 8, 2018; and brother, Gordon Woolsey, on April 15, 2018. He also was preceded in death by his wife, Alice Woolsey, on January 3, 2021; son, Robert Woolsey, on August 24, 2006; and daughter, Irene Marie Cayton, on March 17, 2021.

He is survived by his son, William; grandchildren, James Sturgeon, Matthew Sturgeon, Deven Cayton, and Wyatt Cayton; as well as numerous nieces and nephews.



If you take a page of obituaries, please leave a note in the box with the page number so it can be replaced.