



**RATKE,
Ernest Gordon**

Ernest Ratke passed away on Monday, March 21, 2016 at the age of 83 years.

Ernie was born on December 7, 1932 at Biggar, Sask. The family moved to Dafoe, Sask. when he was a year old and he grew up on the family farm south of Dafoe. Ernie attended Foote School, a one-room country school and took Gr. nine and 10 by correspondence. He completed his high school at Jansen High School. Upon graduation, Ernie attended Saskatoon Normal School for his teacher training. In the following years, he obtained a Bachelor of Education and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Saskatchewan and a Diploma in Educational Administration from the University of Regina. Ernie began his teaching career with the Lanigan School Unit in 1952. He spent 14 years teaching at a number of one-room schools - Prairie Rose School, Bieberdorf School, Deer Plain School (Esk) and was principal at Jansen School (middle years). Ernie married Imogene Braitenback on August 7, 1955 and they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary last year. They were blessed with six children. In 1967, Ernie and his family moved to Yorkton and became members of St. Paul Lutheran Church. In Yorkton, he served as principal at Burke School, Victoria School, Dr. Brass School and St. Joseph's Junior High School (a joint Public and Catholic school). In 1981, he was appointed Director of Education for the Yorkton Public School Division, retiring in 1994 for a total of 42 years in education. Ernie's interests were wide and varied. He enjoyed the great outdoors and all it offered, including daily walks for many years on the nature trail at York Lake with Imogene, taking in nature. He loved flowers and in later years became an avid gardener. In earlier years, there were many memorable camping trips with Imogene, six children and the family dog, well before the era of mini-vans! He was fondly known to his family as "Mr. Efficiency" and inherited from his father the ability to fix almost anything. In retirement, Ernie became a television sports and news junkie. He spent many hours listening to music, especially the Blues and music from the Big Band era. Ernie was an avid sports fan. He cheered for the Toronto Maple Leafs from the early radio days with Foster Hewitt. Ernie was a fanatic fan of the Saskatchewan Roughriders. From the 1960s onward, Ernie and Imogene rarely missed a game and were usually joined by other family members. Throughout his life, family was first and foremost to Ernie and

he supported his family in every possible way.

Ernie is survived by his wife Imogene; son Garry (Wendy), Olds, Alta. and children William (Christine) Ratke, Melissa (Greg) Ottahal, Janice (Tom) Johnston; son Keith (Dianne) Ratke, Good Spirit Acres, Sask. and children Ryan, Dylan, Jordan; daughter Sandra Calver, Saskatoon, Sask. and children Christina, Tamarra, Ronelle, Teri; daughter Kathleen (Ken) Hoffman, Eatonia, Sask. and children Jessica, Miranda and Clayton; daughter Sheila Potter, Saskatoon, Sask. and children Veronica and Tara; son Aran (Denise) Silmeryn (former name Jeffrey Ratke), Wolfville, N.S. and Rei (Brianna) Silmeryn; great-grandchildren Shaddix, Rory Alexis, Holden and Micalah; sisters Edna Lefler and Linda Paetsch, Jansen, Sask. and brother-in-law Allen (Joyce) Braitenback, Saskatoon, Sask. and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his parents, William and Julia, brother William, sisters Olga, Martha, Helen (Gus) Dehr, Alma (Henry) Holfeld, Mary (Bert) Herbers, Alice (Harry) Gier and in-laws John and Wanda Braitenback.

A private family gathering will be held in celebration of Ernie's life at a later date.

The family wishes to thank all of those who cared for Ernie during his illness and offers special thanks to Dr. Osime, Dr. Obiora and the nursing staff at Yorkton and Canora Hospitals for their dedicated and compassionate care.