

Don Rathert, 83, Rapid City, died March 15 at Rapid City Regional Hospital. Don was born September 6, 1926 at Columbia, SD to Frank and Florence Rathert. He was raised on a farm. He served in the US Army from 1945 to 1947 and returned to the family farm and trucking. He obtained his GED and attended college at Northern State College and Yankton College, majoring in theology at the latter.

He married Annette Rathert May 18, 1956 at Yankton. They have two sons, Scot and Kevin.

He graduated from Yankton College and began teaching at Kyle, SD. He obtained his MS in Education Administration from Black Hills State University and served as school principal in several area schools.

Don loved to work with children and was a 4-H leader, Placerville Camp counselor and bus driver for that camp, Sunday school teacher and mentor. His hobby of rock collecting was shared with over 15,000 children in the area schools. He became known by the children as "Mr. Don " and "the rock man", as he handed out polished rocks to children wherever he went. He carried a jar of rocks in his pickup truck.

He was an active member of the Western Dakota Gem & Mineral Society and the Black Hills Regional Multiple Use Coalition.

He is survived by his wife, sons Scot of Rapid City and Kevin of Spearfish, brother Delbert Rathert of Nebraska, sister Shirley Nilssen of Columbia, SD, and nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, three sisters, and a brother.

Services will be held March 22 at the Kirk Funeral Home, Rapid City at 10:00 AM with the Rev. Herb Cleveland officiating. Inurnment will follow at the Black Hills National Cemetery with military honors. There will be a luncheon following to be arranged by members of the WDG&MS club.

Memorials may be made to the American Lung Association and the Museum of Natural History, 117 Main St. Hill City, SD

An online guest book is available at [www.kirkfuneralhome.com](http://www.kirkfuneralhome.com)