

Norris John Carstens, 83, of Burwell, Nebraska died Sunday November 9th, 2014 at CHI Health St. Francis in Grand Island, Nebraska.

Funeral services will be 10:30 a.m. Thursday, November 13, 2014 at St. John's Lutheran Church in Burwell, Nebraska. Burial will in Cottonwood Cemetery in Burwell. Pastor Matt Berndt will officiate. Visitation will be Wednesday from 5 – 7 p.m. at Hitchcock Funeral Home in Burwell. Memorials are suggested to St. John's Lutheran Church or the Burwell Veteran's Park.

Norris was born July 17th, 1931 in Battle Creek, Nebraska to August and Nelda (Hofmann) Carstens. Brother of David, Pearl Drahota and Carol Stalker. August and Nelda moved their family early on from Battle Creek to a ranch near Chambers. When Norris was fourteen they moved to the present family ranch in Ericson, Nebraska. Norris drove the hay sweep from Ericson to Bassett to complete his confirmation classes, which; were started before they moved to Ericson.

Norris joined the United States Army in 1952 where he honorably served in Korea. In May of 1952 he married Mary Anne Canfield and five children were born: Dan, Timothy, Bob, Ruth, and James Carstens.

In 1974 Norris married Ina Paul and had six step children: Bob, Susan, Stan, Kevin, Ron, and Randy.

He was half owner of the Ericson Sale Barn for many years, as well as co-owner with his wife Ina of the bar in Wolbach for a number of years before moving back to the ranch following the death of his father. In 2003 Norris and Ina moved to Burwell to live in town, and he went to work driving the van for Community Memorial Health Center until his death.

Norris was a member of St. John's Lutheran Church, which; was a big part of his life. He enjoyed playing cards and games and driving people around.

Norris was a rock to his family and had the biggest heart for his community. He was loved by all who knew him, and if anyone ever needed anything Norris was the first to be there.

He was preceded in death by his son Timothy, his mother and father, his brother Dave, his wife Mary Anne, and two brother-in-laws, Melvin Drahota and Paul Stalker.

Those left to cherish his memory are his wife Ina Carstens, children, Dan and Sabrina Carstens, Bob and Tammy Carstens, Ruth and Walter Frerichs, James Carstens, and step-children Bob and Jane Paul, Susan Opegard, Stan Paul, Kevin and Dwana Paul, Ron Paul, Randy and Brenda Paul, numerous grand children and great grandchildren, two sisters, Pearl Drahota and Carol Stalker and many extended family members.