

Arlo Gebhard

Memorial Endowment



Arlo had deep roots in the farming community, having spent his entire life working with the farming community in some way. He was born on November 29, 1930, to Frederick and Helena Buttke Gebhard from Embden, North Dakota. His maternal and paternal grandparents were some of the early settlers in the Embden/Casselton area during the Dakota Territory days. Arlo grew up attending grade school in Wheatland and graduated from Casselton High School.

In July 1950, he married Ella Widiger, daughter of Paul and Pauline Bender Widiger, in Fessenden. Ella's parents were farmers in the Fessenden area. Arlo's chosen profession at the time was to be a farmer just like his father, grandfather, and father-in-law, so he and Ella started their new life together on the family farm near Embden. They farmed for several years, raising traditional crops plus turkeys. In February 1956, they left the farm to pursue another opportunity. They moved their young family to the Fessenden area where both Arlo and Ella worked for the ASCS office in Wells County. They remained in Fessenden until 1959 when Arlo was made county executive director for ASCS in Ramsey County and moved his family to Devils Lake. He remained in that position until his retirement in 1986. He then joined Ella in her All-Risk Crop Insurance business, allowing him to continue to be involved in the farming environment. Arlo and Ella remained in the Lake Region area.

Arlo enjoyed many hobbies during his lifetime. His love for hunting and fishing were definitely at the top of the list, so the Lake Region area was the

perfect place to live. He instilled this love for the outdoors in his son, sons-in-law, and grandsons over the years. It was always a highlight of his year when he had a hunting or fishing trip planned with the children. Another of his favorite pastimes was carpentry work. Over the years, he built three homes for his family and remodeled several others. He was a perfectionist when it came to carpentry. He truly enjoyed the challenge and the immense satisfaction that came with completion of a project. There wasn't anything he couldn't build or fix. He was extremely proud when his grandson, Matt, chose carpentry as his profession. Other activities included commitments with Kiwanis, Lions, UCT, and Elks.

Even though Arlo did not attend college, he was a voracious reader of both fiction and non-fiction. He instilled in his family the love of books and the value of a good education. All three of Arlo and Ella's children graduated from college, and the tradition continues with his grandchildren.

Arlo always believed that his legacy was his children and grandchildren. He enjoyed spending time with each and every one of them. Arlo and Ella had three children—Paul, Marla, and Marcie—and eight grandchildren—Tracy, Jason, Ryan, Matthew, Amanda, Melanie, Bryan and Lauren.

Arlo died in September of 1999 after a long battle with cancer. He would be extremely proud to know that he is being remembered in this way. His love for farming, his love for the Lake Region, and his love of education make this a fitting memorial to him. ✦