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William Emmanuel Simmons

March 18, 1932 - January 21, 2015

Service to be
held:
At A Later Date

William Emmanuel Simmons, 82, Custer, passed away on January 21, 2015, at Ft. Meade VA Medical Center, Sturgis. Bill was born in San Diego, California on March 18, 1932, to William Dexter and Mary Simmons. He was raised in

the San Diego area and graduated from the La Jolla Academy in La Jolla, CA.

Bill was a very good baseball player and was signed to a minor league baseball contract in the Detroit Tigers Organization. The Korean War started during this time and Bill served his country by signing up with the Marine Corps. He played on the Marine baseball team in Korea and unfortunately was struck in the eye by an errant ball. This made him partially blind in that eye for the rest of his life. His dreams of playing pro baseball were over. After this stint in the Marines, Bill came back to San Diego and became involved in the family construction business.

In 1955, he married Marlene Campbell and fathered sons William and John. Bill learned how to operate heavy equipment and worked for the company that leveled the land for Jack Murphy Stadium (Qualcom) in San Diego.

In the early 1960's, Bill and Marlene's marriage didn't work out and they separated. Bill then met the love of his life Hilda Estabrook Neall. They were married in 1965, merging families. Bill and Hilda then had a daughter together they named Rhonda. During this time, Bill started and operated his own excavating and hauling business.

In the late 1970's, Bill and Hilda set forth on a new venture starting an arts and crafts business that took them all over the country. Their travels brought them to Custer in the Black Hills of South Dakota and this became home.

Bill loved his family and enjoyed big band music, was a huge sports fan, and liked to work in his yard. He was very proud of his service in the Marine Corps.

He is survived by his wife, Hilda, Custer, SD; brother, Ron (Shirley) Simmons, Alpine, CA; son, William (Mary) Simmons, Sycamore, OH; son, John (Lynn) Simmons, Poway, CA; daughter, Rhonda (John) Anderson, Hot Springs, SD; daughters, Gwynne (Bill) McClellan and Cynthia Neall, Custer, SD; son, Wayne (Merritt) Neall, Belton, TX; and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

He is preceded in death by his parents, William and Mary Simmons; and sister, Marilyn Metcalf. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

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