

## A COWBOY'S PRAYER

OUR HEAVENLY FATHER, WE PAUSE AT  
THIS TIME, MINDFUL OF THE MANY  
BLESSINGS YOU HAVE BESTOWED UPON  
US. WE ASK, LORD, THAT YOU WILL BE  
WITH US IN THE ARENA OF LIFE.

WE AS COWBOYS DO NOT ASK FOR SPECIAL  
FAVORS. WE DON'T ASK TO DRAW AROUND  
THE CHUTE FIGHTING HORSE, THE STEER  
THAT WON'T LAY, OR TO NEVER BREAK  
THE BARRIER.

WE DON'T EVEN ASK FOR ALL DAYLIGHT  
RUNS. WE DO ASK LORD, THAT YOU WILL  
HELP US LIVE OUR LIVES HERE ON EARTH  
AS COWBOYS, IN SUCH A MANNER, THAT  
WHEN WE MAKE THAT LAST INEVITABLE  
RIDE, TO THE COUNTRY UP THERE, WHERE  
THE GRASS GROWS LUSH, GREEN AND  
STIRRUP HIGH, AND THE WATER RUNS  
COOL, CLEAR AND DEEP, THAT YOU'LL TAKE  
US BY THE HAND AND SAY:

"WELCOME TO HEAVEN COWBOY, YOUR  
ENTRY FEES ARE PAID."

## *Celebrating* THE LIFE OF Hal Chris John Johnsrud

Born to  
Harold Chris John Johnsrud & Florence Pearl Kerr  
January 13, 1948 ~ North Dakota

Rode into the Sunset  
May 31, 2025 ~ Ceaderville, California

**Funeral Service**  
Saturday, June 14, 2025 at 11:00 am  
Clear Creek Church  
Keene, North Dakota

**-Luncheon to follow services-**

**Officiating**  
Pastor Peder Stenslie  
Gary Lavang

**Pallbearers**  
Stefan Kossick    Cameron Messier  
Chase Hernandez    Cruz Hernandez  
Shane Johnsrud    Henry Johnsrud

**Music Selections**  
"Amazing Grace" ~ Congregational  
"Just As I Am" ~ Congregational  
"Go Rest High on that Mountain" ~ Congregational

**Honorary Pallbearers**  
Shawn Kling    Morgan Johnsrud  
Chris Johnsrud    Nolan Johnsrud

**Final Resting Place**  
Clear Creek Cemetery  
Keene, North Dakota

**Arrangements By**  
Fulkerson Stevenson Funeral Home  
Watford City, North Dakota

## *In Loving* M E M O R Y



Hal Chris John Johnsrud

January 13, 1948 - May 31, 2025





In our eyes, he was the greatest cowboy that ever lived. Hal Chris John Johnsrud wasn't just the real deal —he *defined* what a real cowboy was. Rugged and wild, with a heart that ran deeper than the Missouri River, he lived hard, played hard, and loved even harder.

Born in Williston, North Dakota, on January 13, 1948, he was raised under big skies and among hardworking people. North Dakota was where he came into his own, where he started his family, where his children were born, and where his rodeo and ranching roots took hold. It was the land that shaped him into the man we all came to know and love.

From the time he was young, Hal stood out. He had a highly successful high school rodeo career, capping it with a state championship saddle, a proud moment for a young cowboy with big dreams. He went on to ride for the NDRA and the PRCA, traveling across the region and competing with the best of them. One of his most legendary wins came at the Cheyenne Frontier Days, where he claimed victory in the wild horse race, this was no small feat.

He was always mounted on a good horse, and he wouldn't settle for anything less. One of his all-time favorites was a tough blue roan from North Dakota he called Old Blue, with many more to come over the years. He had so many unforgettable stories, like entering the Crawford, Nebraska rodeo over the Fourth of July, en route to Belle Fourche. That time, he was entered with none other than Chris LeDoux. After they rode, they'd go to the bar and listen to Chris sing. One night, Hal drew a horse named Descent. He got bucked off and Chris joked with him later, saying, "It wasn't your fault, What'd you expect? You got on a horse named *Descent!*"

In 1987, Hal moved to California and began the next chapter of his life at Dry Creek Ranch. There, he brought the same grit and pride to his work that had carried him through the rodeo world.

He built up an incredible set of cattle, they were sound, strong, and worthy of admiration. He poured everything he had into that herd, and it didn't go unnoticed. His cattle program earned him a feature in *California Cattleman's Magazine*, and eventually, the honor of being on the cover. It was a badge of pride, not just for the work he did, but for who he was. Along with building an outstanding herd of cattle, his stewardship for the land was amazing. He cared for walnut, and almond orchards, along with many acres of grape vineyards. His ability to adapt and manage the viticulture and horticulture showed a strong management capacity, his hard work produced intelligence. He was truly a man whose hands built something lasting.

Hal wasn't done competing. While at Dry Creek, he also made a name for himself in the team penning and ranch sorting world, riding in both the PTPA and the USTPA. He won titles across the country, again and again. He had something most riders didn't: a true cattleman's sense, the kind you're born with and sharpen over decades. His ability to read cattle was unmatched, and people never forgot him once they saw him in the pen. In every way, he was legendary.

When he wasn't riding, working, or winning, he was dancing. He *loved* to dance. Whether it was a local bar or a rodeo after-party, you could always find him swinging someone across the floor with a big smile and an easy rhythm. Everybody wanted the chance to dance with him, and when you did, it felt like you were floating. He had that kind of charm.

In his later years, as retirement rolled in, he never really slowed down, he just shifted gears. He spent his spring and summers back in North Dakota, ranching alongside his son CJ. As soon as the weather turned cold, back to California it was.



He spent his winters there with his daughter Tara. Those years were some of the best, always full of family, laughter, and always close to the land. He may have traded bucking chutes for the penning arena, but his soul was the same. He was content, but most of all, he was proud of his life, his children, his cattle, and the legacy he built to leave behind.

Hal had 4 Children, and 15 grandchildren as well as 2 great grandchildren. The mark he left on them was unforgettable. The mark he left on everyone that was lucky enough to know him was evident as well. He was the kind of man who couldn't walk into a room without making a friend. He had a natural magnetism, a wild laugh, quick wit, and a heart that was bigger than the wide open plains he came from. His very unique gifts, were given to him by God. His charm, likability, and love, everything we adored most about Hal ultimately reflects God. The one who created him precisely in that way.

No matter where he was, riding on a ridge in North Dakota, sorting or penning cattle in the arena, or dancing under the stars., in everything he did, he remained a cowboy.

Hal leaves behind his four loving children Cassie Cervera of Alma, Nebraska, Tara Burns of Herald, California, Summer Johnsrud of Woodland, California, and CJ Johnsrud of Mandaree, North Dakota. Grandchildren Stefan, Jaden, Maddie & Abby, Cameron & Lauren, Chase & Cruz, Pearl, Shane Ruby Opal Henry, Emerald, and a baby boy on the way that will be sure to know Hal through the legacy he left behind. Daughter-in-law Tabitha Johnsrud, Marlene, Brother-in-law, Larry Kling, Bryan Burns. Nephew, Shawn Kling, Chris & Nolan. Niece Heather Shelly.

Hal will be greeted on his last ride by his parents, Harold & Florence, and his sister Colleen Kling.