Herman was a member of St. Peter's Episcopal Church. In 1955 the congregation built a new church in its present location which Herman was an integral part of planning and its construction. He served on the Vestry and was active in church life.

At age 80, Herman was the guest of honor and patron of the annual McKenzie County Old Settler's Day Barbeque in Alexander, ND, on September 7, 1996.

Herman married Mary Hapip on Feb. 3, 1944. They raised three daughters, Carol Schmitz, Sandra Mawhinney, and Deborah Heen.


He is survived by his brother, John Schmitz and sisters-in-law, Fritz Bouse and Ruth Hapip; daughters Carol Schmitz; Sandra (Alan) Mawhinney and Deborah Heen; grandchildren, Leslie (Marc) Percival, Carl Nelson (Debra Ledford), Patrick (Keiko) Mawhinney and Mary Michelle “Chelle” Mawhinney; Jason (Jana) Heen, Jeremy (Krista) Heen, Melissa (Jed) Rider, Alicia (Stewart) Kline and Anne-Marie (Kraig) Balcer; 21 great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Herman also leaves behind Zo and Gary Karlstad and their family.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sisters, Tillie Rice, Margaret Maley, and Sr. Mary Verone, RSM.

The family asks that memorial contributions be made to Shriners' Hospitals for Children. Attn: Donor Relations Department, 2900 Rocky Point Dr., Tampa, FL 33607, and Parkinson’s Disease Foundation, 1359 Broadway, Suite 1509, New York, NY 10018.

I’d like the memory of me
To be a happy one,
I’d like to leave
an afterglow of smiles
when life is done.
I’d like to leave an echo
Whispering softly down the ways,
Of happy times and laughing times
And bright & sunny days.
I’d like the tears of those who grieve,
To dry before the sun
Of happy memories
that I leave behind
When life is done.
Herman was born December 3, 1915, on his family's homestead in Poe Township of McKenzie County, ND, to parents Peter and Hedwig (Hackenberg) Schmitz. Herman began his long farming career on the family farm in McKenzie County. Herman left school in the eighth grade, when his father suffered a heart attack. He took over the family finances at age 15 and then expanded the farming operation in 1935 by renting farm land from a bachelor neighbor.

Herman wanted to enlist in the Army during WWII but was told to raise potatoes for the war effort. The Army recruiters let his younger brother, John, join the Army.

In the early '50s Herman helped organize the Williams County Farm Bureau. He also was an insurance agent for NoDak Mutual. Herman served as exalted ruler of the BPOE 1214 Elks Lodge in Williston. He was also a life time member of the Shriners' KEM Temple in Williston and a KEM Temple Bell Ringer. Later he became an active member of the Noon Lions. He was one of the founding members of the Williston Golf Course and became an avid player upon retirement.

Herman was a true champion of ND wheat producer interests and worked tirelessly to capitalize on emerging market opportunities worldwide. He was elected to the ND Wheat Commission in 1969, serving as Chairman of the Board 1971-1973. He represented Great Plains Wheat and attended the International Wheat Council meeting in Tokyo in 1973. Herman traveled the world fostering state, regional and national partnerships. That would later allow North Dakota wheat to move westward, leading to the opening of new market opportunities and growth in hard red spring wheat exports to Asia and other key markets. He also served on the board of Western Wheat Associates and the Agricultural Council of America. He was also involved in the ND Farmers Union and the National Farmers Organization. His travels included Northern Europe, India, Japan, China, South America and the U.S.S.R.

When the U.S.S.R. experienced a shortage of wheat, almost a famine in 1971-72, the United States had a wheat surplus. As a part of a delegation, Herman, along with the Department of Agriculture and the U.S. State Department agreed to lend the U.S.S.R. 500 million dollars at 6 percent interest to complete the wheat purchase.

Schmitz was presented the Lifetime Achievement Award by Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute on October 7, 2010. Herman was a champion of North Dakota wheat producer interests and a significant figure in shaping the current successes of agricultural transportation.

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