

Rollis Balke – BS 1955 Pharmacy

Rollis "Rolly" Balke, 90, of Minneapolis MN, passed away Oct. 15. A memorial service will start at 12 (noon) on Nov. 22, at Christ the King (CTK) Lutheran Church in Hutchinson.

Rollis Dean Balke was born on Feb. 26, 1933 in Crookston, Minnesota. After high school, he enrolled as a first-generation college student at North Dakota State University. After graduating from college with a bachelor's degree in pharmacy, Rolly went into the Army and was stationed in Japan for 1 ½ years. Rolly was married to his dear wife, Rose Marie, for almost 65 years; they spent most of their married life together in Hutchinson, where they raised their four children. Rolly co-owned and worked as a pharmacist at Hutch Drug until, in his early 40s, went back to graduate school and became a teacher of sales, marketing and management at the Hutchinson Area Vocational Technical Institute.

Rolly loved to sing and, as a tenor, sang in the Hutchinson Choristers (men's choral group) and the choir at their church, Christ the King Lutheran.

After retiring from teaching, Rolly enjoyed his hobbies of woodworking, making stain-glass art and painting. He served as a volunteer visiting many veterans who were receiving hospice services as well as helping women and children at the local domestic violence shelter. Together with Rose Marie, they loved spending time with their grandchildren and great-grandchildren!

In 2018, Rolly and Rose Marie moved to Bloomington, where they made new friends in their independent-living community. After Rose Marie's passing on July 4, 2023, Rolly moved into the memory care unit at Friendship Village until his passing on Oct. 15.

Rolly is survived by his four children: Scott, Jeff, Tim and Jean; nine grandchildren; five great-grandchildren.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Rose Marie; parents, Olaf and Mabel; his older brother, Don; and older sister, Darlene.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the Alzheimer's Association.