

# Kuhler Funeral Home

*A family is a legacy of love, a love that lasts forever.*

## Dr. Paul Hohm



Dr. Paul Hohm, age 92, of Huron, died August 25, 2006. His memorial service was held at 11:00 AM, Tuesday, August 29th at the First United Methodist Church, with Rev. Kevin Channell and Rev. William Pfautz, officiating. Burial was in the Riverside Cemetery. Military rites were given by the Huron Veterans Council.

Paul Hohm was born May 21, 1914, on a farm near Yale, South Dakota, to Ludwig and Susannah (Tschetter) Hohm. He grew up on the family farm and received his education in Yale, where he was a three-year letterman in football and track, and was named an outstanding halfback in South Dakota. In addition to his high school sports, he also played tennis as long as he was able. He and his brother Ted often played in the shade of poplar trees on the family farm during midday breaks from chores. Later in life, when he saw the need for an indoor tennis facility in Huron, he designed and financed Hohm Courts adjacent to the Nordby Center for Recreation.

Paul graduated from Huron College in 1939, and graduated from the University of Chicago Medical School. He married Carol Tisdell on December 28, 1939. During World War II, Paul served in the US Navy as a surgeon aboard the hospital ship USS Haven. He served his residency at Ramsey County Hospital in St. Paul, Minnesota, and was offered the opportunity to work alongside a renowned surgeon in St. Paul. However, he and his wife, Carol, made the decision to return to Huron in 1946, where he, his brother and three uncles opened the Tschetter & Hohm Clinic. A new clinic was built three years later.

Paul was the epitome of a country doctor. As medical technology advanced, he reminded younger colleagues that while modern machines unlocked mysteries, doctors must always put people

above all else. For six decades, he dedicated his life to medicine and the care of his patients. He spent 13-hour days caring for the sick, performing surgeries, seeing patients in his clinic and treating athletic injuries. In addition for many years, he drove to Wessington Springs several nights a week and on Saturdays to perform surgery, sometimes making three separate trips within a 24-hour period.

He delivered 3,500 babies. They were all precious to him, but perhaps the most famous of all of them is actress Cheryl Ladd. Well into his eighties, he continued to see five to ten patients a day, six days a week. Even at 90, he was still performing minor surgeries, proud of his steady hands. He wanted to work until he was no longer able, and many of his patients told him they didn't want him to retire, either.

Paul believed it was important to serve in his community. As someone who knew what it was like to be poor, he wanted others to have the same chances as he did. He saw a need, and found a way to get it filled, donating to many causes. For example, he often sponsored four or five struggling Huron College students at a time so they could get a good education, and provided most of the medical care for student-athletes at Huron College at no cost for 34 years. He contributed to improvements at Memorial Park Baseball Field, the wood floor in the Huron Arena and to numerous economic development projects. He and Carol, along with Paul and Donna Christen and the late Jeannette Lusk, established the Christen Hohm Lusk Greater Huron Area Foundation to provide annual grants to worthy projects. He said he thought giving to others was what really made life worthwhile.

Paul was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award by his medical peers, the Huron College Distinguished Alumni Award, the Distinguished Civil Service Award by the Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau, the Service to Mankind Award by the Huron Sertoma Club, and was inducted into the South Dakota Hall of Fame and the Huron College Athletic Hall of Fame. He was presented with the honorary doctor of humane letters degree from Huron College and the Centennial Award from Wessington Springs for outstanding service in the field of emergency care and general surgery in rural South Dakota. Paul also received the Friends of Mental Health Award from Community Counseling Services for his longtime support of mental health care in the area.

Paul served as president of the South Dakota State Medical

Association, and president of the medical staff at Huron Regional Medical Center. He was a charter member of the South Dakota Foundation of Medical Care and was the preceptor for the first certified nurse practitioner in the state. Dr. Paul has served as the chairman of the board of directors of the Violet Tschetter Memorial Home, manager of the home, and its medical director for the past several decades. He was a fellow in the International Academy of Proctology and served on the board of trustees and chaired the executive committee of the South Dakota Comprehensive Health Planning and Regional Medical Program. In addition, he was one of the original incorporators of the South Dakota Blue Shield and became its president in South Dakota and later on the national level.

He was also one of the original incorporators of First Federal Savings and Loan Association in Huron and at one time owned and operated West Park Truck Stop and Fair City Lanes. Along with his business partner, Paul Christen, they built the Christen Hohm Building, which was later donated to the city for municipal and private offices. The two partners also renovated the Tams Hotel into the Hickory House Motor Inn. His family commissioned a San Francisco muralist to paint "The Land Rush" on the side of the Fair City Lanes building, the site of the former U.S. Land Office. It depicts the rush for land in 1882, and includes Paul and Carol Hohm in line to stake their own claim.

Proud of being considered an old-fashioned practitioner, "Dr. Paul" will be missed by the thousands of patients he treated and counseled, and the thousands more who called him a good friend.

He was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers, Dr. Ted and Ewald; and three sisters, Matilda Tschetter, Viola Hohm and Ella Bradfield.

Grateful for having shared his life are his beloved wife, Carol, of Huron; his daughter, Marilyn Hoyt, of Huron; his two sons, Dr. Richard (Peggy), of Fort Collins, Colorado, and Dr. Robert (Holly) Hohm, of Huron; seven grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; his sister, Olga (William) Pfautz, of Huron; and his brother, Jim (Ida) Hohm, of Yale.