

*In Loving Memory Of*  
**George John Fossen, Jr.**

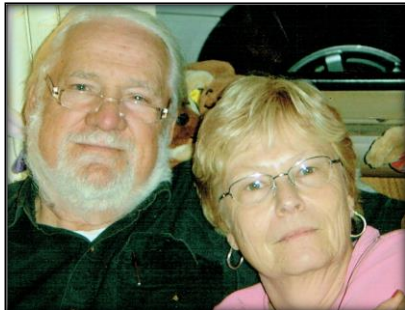
**Born**  
January 17, 1931  
Colon, Panama

**Died**  
September 26, 2017  
Ft. Meade, South Dakota

**Graveside Service**  
Friday, September 29, 2017, at 1:00 p.m.  
Black Hills National Cemetery  
Sturgis, South Dakota

**Officiant** ~ Father Bunker Hill

**Military Honors**  
Sturgis Veteran's Honor Guard

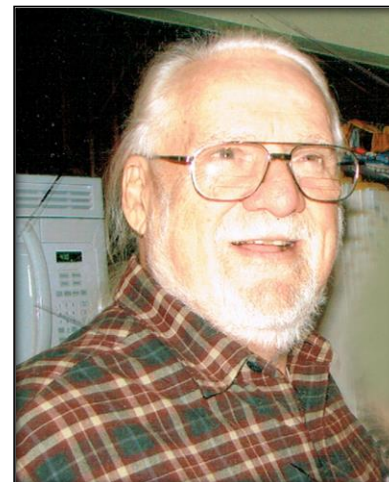
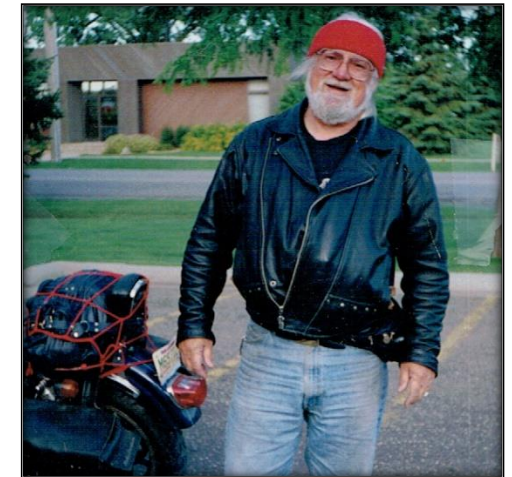


*Do not stand by my grave and weep:  
I am not there. I do not sleep.  
I am a thousand winds that blow,  
I am the diamond glints on snow,  
I am the sunlight on ripened grain,  
I am the gentle autumn's rain.*

*When you awaken in the morning's hush,  
I am the swift uplifting rush of  
quiet birds in circled flight.  
I am the soft stars that shine at night.  
Do not stand at my grave and cry;  
I am not there. I did not die.*



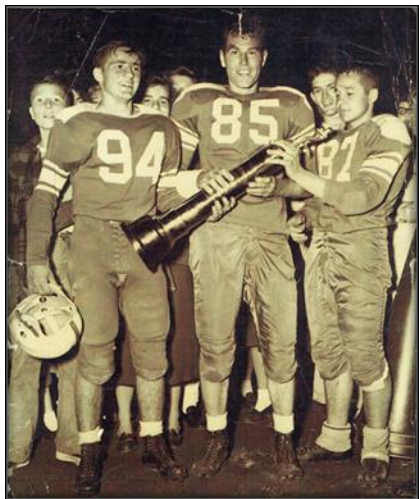
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**George John  
Fossen, Jr.**

**1931 ~ 2017**

## George John Fossen, Jr.

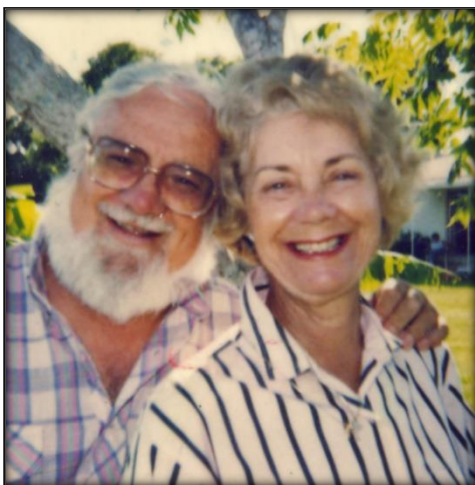


George John Fossen, Jr., was born January 17, 1931, in Colon, Panama, into a military family. The family lived in Hawaii until age ten when they moved to Washington State. He graduated high school in 1949 from Clover Park, Takoma, WA. He attended the University of Puget Sound where he met his first wife, Joyce Anderson, the sweetheart of Sigma Chi. To this union were born their sons, Skip and Geoff. In 1970, the family moved

to Rapid City when George took the position of educational psychologist with the Rapid City School System. Joyce, South Dakota School of Mine's traveling "Fossil Lady" died in 1990 after a siege of cancer from age 19. George remarried Mary Wood of Sturgis in 1992.

George's military involvement included 4 Years in the Washington State National Guard followed by 2 Years of Active Duty in the US Army, Counter Intelligence. He was stationed in Korea briefly before being transferred to Japan and was honorably discharged in 1955. He was proud of his service to his country.

George graduated from Puget Sound in 1953 with a minor in pre-theology and a major in history. From 1956 to 1964, he was on the faculty of Clover Park High School. During his teaching career he also provided adult education at McNeil Island Penitentiary, taught civics to foreign wives of soldiers who had married overseas, taught Sunday School and developed the special education program at Bethel in Tacoma, WA. His spiritual philosophy continued throughout his life and was exhibited in all of his actions until his death (except perhaps when a Broncos football player made what he considered a bad play). He continued his education in various disciplines of psychology from a variety of schools and graduated with a PhD in Educational Psychology from the University of North Dakota in 1970 at which time



he joined the faculty of the Rapid City School System.

George always said that he "did the right thing for the wrong reason" and was a "phony" until age 34 when he reinvented himself after he was introduced to the 60's upheavals through the students in his Sunday School Class. He quit shaving much to the chagrin of his mother, started experimenting with marijuana and alcohol and developed a strong aversion to conflict in general, including military conflict. His wife, Joyce, always said that she had been married to two different men.

George's passion was his involvement with children and he was a strong advocate for children with special needs. He always worked for a child's best interest but not necessarily by the book. He was a lifetime learner, fearless and courageous. He was generous with his love and his resources and always made an effort not to "yuck on anybody's yum" and fiercely defended his own. He identified strongly with the "imp" of transactional analysis and was a magnet for his grandchildren and was delightfully playful to the end. At the time of his death, he had been "clean and sober" for 38 years.

George, age 86 of Sturgis, SD, died September 26, 2017, at the Hospice Care Center, Fort Meade VA.

George is survived by his wife, Mary; his sons, Skip (Pat Cromell) and Geoff; his daughters by marriage, Paloma (aka Toni) Kinney (Dean) and Pilar Bruch (Mark); grandchildren, Cole and Faryn Sawyer and Luke Bruch; sister-in-law, Susan Writer; brother, Richard Fossen in Scottsdale, AZ, (Dianne) and children; the Saturday morning "Lesser Growth Group" (Patty Hamm, Katie Schroeder, Bryan Jonas and Dot Arnold); and the employees of McDonald's who voted on his assumed death when he hadn't showed up for a few weeks.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Joyce; sisters, Bunny Lowe (Don) and Dot Keeth (Bob).

He will be so missed by those with whom he shared his life.

In lieu of a memorial or flowers, please give to a charity of your choice.

Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.kinkadefunerals.com](http://www.kinkadefunerals.com).



*Please join the family in a celebration of George's life at 1933 Williams Street, Sturgis, following the service.*