



CLASS OF

1959

ROD TJADEN

Rod Tjaden (1941–1997) graduated from Bismarck High School in 1959. According to his family, one of his fondest memories of high school was being a member of the teams that won state basketball championships in 1957, 1958 and 1959.

After high school, Rod graduated from Bismarck Junior College and from the University of North Dakota with a BSBA degree in economics and finance. Rod was a dedicated husband to his wife and business partner, Sandy; and a dedicated father to his daughters, Kim and Kristen.

Rod's career began in 1963 with Harold Schafer's Gold Seal Company in Chicago, Milwaukee, Atlanta and New Jersey. From 1971–1987, Rod served as general manager for the Medora division of the Gold Seal Company.

Most North Dakotans associate the names Rod and Sandy Tjaden with Medora, North Dakota. As Medora's mayor for 18 years, Rod helped bring about improvements in police, fire and ambulance services, a new community center, swimming pool and tennis courts for its citizens.

Rod served as president of the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation from 1987–1997. He also served as president of the Old West Trail Foundation, a five-state regional tourism promotional organization. Former North Dakota tourism director Jim Fuglie said, "Rod pretty much created a tourism industry in North Dakota when there wasn't one. I know he trained a lot of us tourism directors. Thank God for that!" In addition to his love for Medora, Rod had a passion for jazz, photography, golf and basketball.

Rod's expertise was sought by many state and national organizations to which he generously donated his time including: member of Vision 2000, a statewide citizen planning council; national board member of A Christian Ministry in the National Parks; board member of the UND Medical Center Rehab Hospital; and, Board of Trustee for MedCenter One.

Rod Tjaden was a positive thinker, a visionary, and a highly creative person.

