

Howard Matz was born at home, March 13, 1928, to George and Elsie [Kluender] Matz in Walters, Minnesota. He grew up on the family farm with three siblings in Faribault County, southern Minnesota. He attended country school there for eight years and graduated from Kiester High School.

Due to a childhood illness, Howard could not farm and took his mother and superintendent's advice to become a teacher. He received a four-year, full scholarship to Mankato State College (now Minnesota State University, Mankato). Following graduation, he taught junior high students in several area schools. During his second year of teaching, he met the love of his life, Susanna (Sue) Friesen, a home economics instructor. They married in August 1954.

In 1957, Howard received his Master's Degree in Education, and he and Sue welcomed the birth of their daughter, Suzann Helene Matz. Howard received a professorship at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois, where he and fellow professors set up the curricula for the College of Education Department.

In 1961, the family moved to Colorado Springs because of Sue's asthma and Howard had to leave his doctoral studies. Howard taught at the Horace Mann Junior High School for 17 years, until he retired in 1978 after a second heart attack.

As a child, Howard was baptized and received his catechism at Rice Lake Evangelical Church. He accepted the Lord as his Savior as a teenager. Later, in Colorado Springs, he rededicated his life to Christ after hearing Corrie ten Boom, author of *The Hiding Place*.

Howard and his family attended the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Colorado Springs, where he was a Sunday School Superintendent and lead in Helen Leonard's famous military-themed Vacation Bible Schools. Later, the family joined First Presbyterian Church, where Howard was a deacon and moderator with Rev. John Stevens.

Howard was very active with the Horticultural Art Society of Colorado Springs. In 1996, he was elected president of the prestigious National Convention of Garden Clubs, and in 1998, he was named the Colorado Master Gardener of the Year. He judged floral arranging contests at county fairs and garden clubs and was a volunteer Master Gardener instructor for El Paso County from about 2000-2006. At age 93, with the help of former student Jeff Hayes, Howard published on Amazon his three-volume set *Memory Gems A-Z*, a collection of cultural sayings, quotes, and verses. Earlier he had written and published, *Plant Names—Common Name and Botanical Name*.

Fellow gardener Larry Stebbins said of his friend, "Many have described Howard as a gentle, kind, and giving person, whose favorite book to read was the Bible. His faith was very important in his life. He will be deeply missed by me..." Howard was grateful for the friendship of his caregivers Gary and Margaret Campbell, Gary and LaVera Fenton, Jeff and Sue Hayes, Larry and Anna Stebbins, Mark and Angie Vehlewald, Dave and Ann Williamson, plus his Koinonia Sunday School class.

Howard will be buried next to his wife and daughter in Delft, Minnesota. Memorial contributions may be made to First Presbyterian Church, Colorado Springs; Denver Botanical Gardens; or the charity of one's choice.