

DOHN L. JONES

Dohn L. Jones was born in a quaint rural town of Cresbard, South Dakota, a stone's throw southwest of Aberdeen, on May 4, 1936. When he was six (6) years old, he attended the South Dakota School for the Deaf for thirteen (13) years – the most memorable, educational, and productive 13 years of his life.



It has been said time and again in the academic community that education or “real learning” is what remains when you forgot everything that you have learned. This is largely true and cannot be disputed. The development of students is best when the environment encourages the students to try new activities on their own, to feel free to exhibit their talents, to share personal skills and feelings without being afraid of skepticism or rejection. It is the informal out-of-class dialogue, the integrated campus situations, and self-directed learning through pragmatic educational activities where students come fully alive to the fundamental issues of human life. Dohn L. Jones is best remembered by his peers for his artistic skills, particularly his variety of impromptu artwork campuswide and as a comedian with fantastic acting talent for imitating famous people such as Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Adolf Hitler and Charlie Chaplin and for humanizing things – train, airplane, locomotive, Tower Clock, and so on. He was the “Sid Caesar of SDSD,” an entertainer extraordinaire.

His dual artistic talent brought much local and state recognition to the school when the SDSD students traveled across the state and Sioux Falls to demonstrate their talents and skills unique to deafness and hearing loss. He also displayed these talents in the other states to the delight of the audiences, bringing honor to the state of South Dakota.

A 1955 SDSD graduate, he attended South Dakota State University for a year where he played guard on the varsity football team before going to Gallaudet University the following year. He has been an employee of the U.S. Geological Survey in Washington, D.C., Denver, Colorado, and Rolla, Missouri, the present site, for forty-four (44) years.