

## Merle Dean Bettcher, 80

Feb. 4, 1937 - Jan. 5, 2018



**HARLAN** – Merle Dean Bettcher, son of Jesaias and Gertrude (Nicolaus) Bettcher, was born February 4, 1937, in Butte, NE. He was baptized at St. Paul Congregational in Naper, NE, and confirmed at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Omaha, NE. He attended South High School in Omaha, where he graduated with the class of 1955.

Merle enlisted into the U.S. Navy in April of 1956. He served with Fighter Squadron One Twenty One in Miramar San Diego, CA until March of 1960. He served his country honorably until April of 1962, receiving the Good Conduct Medal.

On February 8, 1959, Merle was united in marriage to Frances Marie Plagman. In 1959, their first daughter, Tammy, was born in San Diego. After her birth, they returned to Omaha, NE, where he worked at Safeway. Their son, Terry, was born in 1961 and their daughter, Kris, was born in 1964 in Omaha. Merle and Frances moved to Harlan in 1969, where Merle worked at Super Value, Jim's Locker, and most recently at Irwin Locker until retiring in November of 2017.

Merle was a survivor of oral cancer since 2009. He enjoyed the outdoors with fishing, camping and boating. He was a big Nebraska Cornhuskers fan. Most of all, Merle loved time spent with his family, playing with his children and grandchildren, and being with his love, Frances.

Merle died on Friday, January 5, 2018, at Myrtue Medical Center in Harlan, attaining the age of 80 years, 11 months and one day. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother Wilbert.

Merle is survived by his wife Frances Bettcher of Harlan; children Tammy Garrison of Harlan; Terry Bettcher and his wife Holly of La Vista, NE; Kris and her husband Mark Maxwell of Harlan; eight grandchildren; seven great grandchildren; sister Liane Bintz of Council Bluffs; nieces and nephews; other family members and many friends.

An 11 a.m. memorial service was officiated by Rev. Michael Agnew on Tuesday, January 9, 2018 at Pauley Jones Funeral Home in Harlan. Alexander Gifford, Landon Garrison, Kyler Garrison, Caileen Bettcher, Cambrie Bettcher, Julie Bettcher and Kenadie Maxwell served as honorary urn bearers. Cody Garrison, Brandy Garrison, Nicholas Bettcher, Johnathon Bettcher, Daniel Bettcher, Angela Maxwell, David Maxwell and Logan Maxwell served as urn bearers. Military Rites were conducted by Harlan American Legion Helmer Reyelt Post No. 150.

Pauley Jones Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements.

**Pauley Jones**  
FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION

& Pfannebecker Funeral Home

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