

## Gene Block, 78

*Jan. 20, 1925 - Sept. 20, 2003*

**HARLAN** – Edward Eugene Block, the son of Nels C. and Jessie Erickson Block, was born Jan. 20, 1925, in Harlan. His parents farmed east of Irwin, known as the Cobb Ranch. He attended school in Kirkman for 10 years and the last two years in Harlan and graduated with the class of 1942. Gene entered the Army April 12, 1943. He went to Camp Grant, IL for basic training then transferred to Fort Bragg, NC, where he was assigned to the 97th General Hospital Corp. He applied for cadets school with the Air Force in Miami Beach, FL where he was assigned to gunnery school in Shepard Field, TX. When the school closed he was shipped to Fresno, CA for the replacement pool. He then joined a B-29 outfit and was shipped to McCook Air Base in Nebraska for training for overseas. The troop train then took him to Fort Lewis, WA where they were loaded on a Dutch ship Jan. 1, 1944, and headed to Guam. It took them 27 days to get there. He served at Northfield in Engineer Supply until receiving his discharge March 4, 1946. He was recalled Aug. 5, 1950 to the reserves for the Korean Conflict and was sent to Francis E. Warren Air Base in Cheyenne, WY. He was then shipped to Lubbock, TX then to Wright-Patterson Air Base to relieve civilians and transferred to Tinker Field in Oklahoma City, OK where he was discharged Aug. 15, 1951.



Gene married Jo Jacobsen Feb. 24, 1961, in Omaha, NE. Together he and Jo raised six children, Dave, Linda, Diane, Gaike, Todd and Kurt. Gene was employed as a blade operator with Western Engineering for about 50 years. He spent a lot of time on the farm with his father. He never had a knack for farming so he bought an acreage and always said that was the closest he would ever get to farming, instead he did gardening. In addition to working at Western Engineering, he and Joe operated Harold's Club in Harlan from 1961 to 1976. Gene died Sept. 20, 2003, at Mytue Memorial Hospital at age 78 years and eight months.

His parents and one son, David, preceded Gene in death. Survivors include his wife, Jo of Harlan; his children, Linda (Jim) Ross of Norwalk; Diane (Calvin) Bradley of Omaha, NE; Gaike Brown of Harlan; Todd Brown (Julie) of Castle Rock, CO; Kurt Block (Alison) of Blair, NE; 17 grandchildren; eight great grandchildren; his brothers, Nels Block, Jr. (Gwen) of Harlan and Russell Block of Village, FL; and other relatives.

Funeral services were held Sept. 24, 2003, at Pauley Jones Funeral Home with Rev. Gundar Lamberts officiating. Honorary casket bearers were Paul Nielsen, Benny Charbonneau, Roland Wegner, Don Springman, Murray Nielsen, Anker Rasmussen, Fraz Rasmussen, Dewey Conrad, Raymond Andersen and Garry Blum. Casket bearers were John Linde, Tom Wageman, Calvin Pederson, Mike Davidson, Mike Whitaker and Harold Blackwell. Burial was in the Harlan Cemetery.