

Merle Fenton Bolich, 90



April 15, 1927 - March 19, 2018

HARLAN – Merle “John” Fenton Bolich, son of Andrew Jackson and Ella (Brown) Bolich was born on April 15, 1927 in Ainsworth, NE. He attended school at the Brown County School near Ainsworth. After high school, John entered the United States Army on May 4, 1945 at Ft. Leavenworth in Kansas.

John served his country state-side for six months before being deployed to Japan at the end of World War II. He served overseas for one month until his honorable discharge on December 4, 1945. He was awarded Asiatic Pacific Theater Ribbon and the World War II Victory Medal. After World War II, John reenlisted into the United States Army Air Corps where he served another 24 years ending his military service in the United States Air Force.

While serving his country, John was stationed throughout the world in Germany in 1946, Tokyo, Japan in 1952, Goose Bay Air Base in Labrador, Canada in 1955, Kunsan, South Korea in 1963, Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines in 1965 and Da Nang Air Force Base in Vietnam also in 1965, just to name a few. During his time in the service, John was united in marriage to Therese Louise Hamik on December 23, 1948. John retired from the United States Air Force with his honorable discharge on December 31, 1969 at the Lowry Air Force Base in Colorado having attained the rank of Technical Sergeant.

John returned to civilian life and worked for Coca-Cola while he and Therese were living in Colorado. They then decided to move to Harlan in 1981 at the time of his retirement. Together they loved canning and cooking the fruits of their labor in their garden and sharing with their family, friends and neighbors. After the death of Therese on October 18, 1997, John became active at the Senior Center in Harlan where he volunteered in the kitchen for nine years and also served on the Senior Center Council for a number of years.

Due to declining health, John moved to the Avoca Specialty Care in Avoca in July of 2014. It was here that he died on March 19, 2018 having attained the age of 90 years, 11 months and four days. In addition to his parents and wife, John was preceded in death by his siblings: Carl, Leonard, Ora, Beryl, Velma, Marcella and two infant sisters.

John is survived by his sister, Mary Clark of Ainsworth, NE; nieces and nephews; his adopted granddaughters: Ashley Petersen, Anna Pauley and Wendy Montgomery; special friends, Karyn Gilpatric and Lee and Alice Kenkel; other relatives and many friends.

An 11 a.m. funeral service was celebrated by Rev. Mr. Pat Davitt on Tuesday, March 27, 2018 at Pauley Jones Funeral Home in Harlan. Ashley Petersen, Anna Pauley, Wendy Montgomery, Ray Book, Leo Goesser, and Tom Walker served as casket bearers. Military Rites were conducted by Harlan American Legion Helmer Reyelt Post No. 150 and Shelby County VFW Post No. 941 at the Harlan Cemetery in Harlan.

Pauley Jones
FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION

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Pauley Jones Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements.