

## Ken L. Crees, 68

*April 11, 1931 – June 19, 1999*

**HARLAN** – Kenneth Leon Crees, son of James L. and Edna J. (Madsen) Crees, was born in Audubon, April 11, 1931. He graduated from Audubon High School in 1949, and began working as a surveyor. He then served in the U.S. Navy for ten years from 1952-1962.

June 16, 1956, Ken married Joan M. Mathisen at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Audubon. After his discharge from the Navy, he held various jobs, including driving an Omar bread truck, selling advertising, working at Super Valu in Audubon and Harlan and working at SDI as a garden center salesman. He was later employed at the Western Iowa Pork Plant. In 1968, he opened Crees Garden Center, which he and Joan operated until his retirement, when he sold the business to his son, Dan. After retiring, Ken and Joan built their home in "Cresthaventown", as their granddaughter named it. Ken served as general contractor and worked in all phases of the construction. He was a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Harlan, where he recently sat on the Board of Properties. He was a member of Shelby County VFW Post 941 in Harlan. Ken loved children and he always had Tootsie Rolls for the young ones who visited the Garden Center. He died June 19, 1999, at Myrtue Memorial Hospital at age 68 years, two months and eight days.

Preceding Ken in death were his father, James L. Crees; one daughter, Julie Crees; and one brother, Don Crees. Survivors include his wife of 43 years, Joan Crees of Harlan; his mother, Edna Crees of Audubon; three daughters, Cindy Robillard and Lauri (Jeff) Bates, both of Doraville, GA and Cathy Crees of Des Moines; two sons, Dan (Natalie) Crees of Harlan and Jeff (Staci) Crees of Van Meter; two sisters, Betty (Everett) Schmidt of Bella Vista, AR and Carol (Dwain) Thompson of Exira; his mother-in-law, Mabel Mathisen of Elk Horn; one sister-in-law, Charlene (Russ) Jespersen of Elk Horn; one brother-in-law, Rick (Bev) Mathisen of Maple Valley, WA; ten grandchildren, Kelly, Marissa and Scott Robillard; Ryan and Alyssa Bates; Jason, Brianna and Travis Crees and Amber and Allison Crees; and other relatives.

Funeral services were held June 22, 1999, at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Harlan, with Pastor Jon Benson officiating. Casket bearers were Randy Jespersen, Randy Thompson, Brett Schmidt, Chad Mathisen, Bert Hillers and John Schuning. Burial was in the Harlan Cemetery. Burmeister-Johannsen Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.