

Donald Ehlers, 81

Oct. 27, 1921 - Oct. 8, 2003

MINDEN – Donald Herman Ehlers was born Oct. 27, 1921, at the farm in Minden, the son of Herman Otto Ehlers and Anna Christina (Halm) Ehlers. He attended country school in rural Minden. He was in the last graduating class of the old Minden School. He was in the U.S. Air Force from 1943 to 1946. Don and his twin brother, Ron, and friends went to school for six months at Frye Aircraft Company in Omaha, NE, when Don was approximately 19-20 years old. They then went to interview for a job in Englewood, CA, with North American Aircraft, building bombers and worked there for about two years. Then they all got drafted, so they went back home to Iowa. Don was 23 when he got drafted. Don took the train from Omaha to Wichita Falls, TX, to Sheppard Field where he took his basic training. He was then sent to Fort Crook in Omaha, NE, to take automotive training. Don then went to St. Louis to the Jefferson Barracks for his overseas training. He was then sent to Stockton, CA where he boarded a freighter ship with 500 other soldiers. This freighter docked in Brisbane, Australia. He then flew to New Guinea and was stationed there for a while. He moved to different islands a total of seven times while serving. His first move was a boat ride to the Philippines. He then moved to Iwa Shima. His theater was under General McArthur and he fought under the fifth theater of war. Don was then moved to Yokohama, Japan and there he waited for his orders to come home. His ship back home ported at Seattle, WA. He then took a train to Fort Leavenworth, KS where he was discharged and then took a train to Omaha. Don's highest rank was corporal.

Aug. 31, 1946, Don Ehlers and Madeline Coontz were married in Council Bluffs. Following their marriage, they settled on a farm northwest of Minden. He began farming in 1947 and retired from farming in 1976. He died Oct. 8, 2003, at age 81 years, 11 months and eight days.

Don was preceded in death by his parents, Herman and Anna Ehlers; brother, Jerome; and identical twin brother, Ronald Ehlers. He is survived by his wife, Madeline of 57 years; his six children, son, Larry (Dianne) Ehlers of Persia; daughters, Donna Jahn of Springfield, MO; Peggy (Gene) McCool of Shelby; LaRee (Randy) See of Harrison, AR; Sandy (Ron) Schnoor of Manilla; and Jan Evans of Shelby; eight grandchildren and six great grandchildren and other relatives.

Funeral services were held Oct. 11, 2003, at the Minden United Church of Christ with Dennis Peterson officiating. Bural was in the Minden Cemetery. Honorary casket bearers were Tammy Eberl and Melissa Jahn. Casket bearers were Jason Ehlers, Todd Meaney, Shane McCool, Travis McCool, Ryan See, Brian See and the Fill n Food coffee group. Pauley Knutson Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.