

Ralph Gessert, 66

Oct. 20, 1942 - Jan. 20, 2009

HARLAN — Ralph Edward Gessert, son of Donald and Regina (Patten) Gessert was born on October 20, 1942 in Portsmouth, and was the oldest of fifteen children. He was baptized and confirmed at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Harlan, and attended Lincoln Township Country School before graduating from Harlan High School in 1961. After high school, Ralph began working for the Shelby County Road Department. April 13, 1964, Ralph joined the United States Army in Omaha, NE, and served a tour of duty in Vietnam where he earned three Purple Hearts, a Combat Infantry Badge, and a Vietnam Service Medal. He was honorably discharged on April 8, 1966 and returned to Harlan where he continued to work at the Road Department.



June 15, 1968 Ralph was united in marriage to Mickie Kimball at St. Michael's Catholic Church. Two sons were born to this union: Shawn and Stephen. After their wedding, Ralph and Mickie lived in Harlan before buying a farm southwest of Harlan where they built their current house. In December 2007, Ralph retired from the Road Department after forty-seven years and kept busy bowling with his brothers, fishing, hunting, and spending time with his grandchildren: Justice, Thysen, Jayden, and Jenna. Ralph died on Tuesday, January 20, 2009 at Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, NE having attained the age of sixty-six years and three months.

Ralph is preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his wife Mickie; their sons Shawn and his wife Renee and Stephen and his wife Dori all of Harlan; four grandchildren: Justice, Thysen, Jayden, and Jenna; his siblings: Donald Gessert and his wife Susan of Elk Horn; Darold Gessert of Harlan; Jo Ann and her husband Lonnie Rose of Harlan; Wayne Gessert of Council Bluffs; Rozann Tresner of Maryville, MO; Dale Gessert and his wife Georgia of Heartland, WI; Diane and her husband Terry Derby; Kathy and her husband John Kelly; Marcia and her husband Tom Albertson; Randall Gessert; Darwin Gessert and his wife Mary all of Harlan; Beverly Gessert of Minden; Dean Gessert and his wife Deb and Donna Jean Gessert all of Harlan; nieces; nephews; other family members and many friends.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Saturday, January 24, 2009 at 10:00 AM at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Harlan, with Rev. Bob Hoefler celebrating the service. Military Rites were held at St. Michael's Catholic Church following mass by the Shelby County VFW Post No. 941 and the Har-

lan American Legion Helmer Reyelt Post No. 150. Serving as honorary casket bearers were Ralph's grandchildren: Justice Gessert, Thysen Gessert, Jayden Gessert, and Jenna Gessert. Serving as casket bearers were Dale Gessert, Darwin Gessert, Dean Gessert, Wayne Gessert, Donald Gessert, Randy Gessert, Darold Gessert, and Roy Gorman.

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