

Donald Petersen, 78

June 10, 1931 - Feb. 11, 2010

HARLAN — Donald Eugene Petersen was born in Denison, on June 10, 1931, the son of Hans and Emma (Thomsen) Petersen. He was baptized and confirmed in the Lutheran church. He lived in Denison until the 4th grade when his family moved to rural Dow City. After graduation from high school in 1949, he worked as a telegraph agent for the Illinois Central Railroad.



In 1952, Don married Mary Jane Thompson at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Ute. He was drafted into the Marine Corp five days later and was discharged in 1954. Don continued working for the railroad until 1963. He then moved his family to Schleswig, and worked as a custodian for the schools. Don had many talents. He worked as a hired man engaged in farming, maintenance man for the town of Persia and the Harlan Hospital, custodian and school bus driver for the Harlan Schools, and Sunday School teacher and Superintendent. He sang in the choir and for many relative's weddings and funerals. He sang for all three of his children's weddings. He even had a role in the Denison play, "It's a Wonderful Life". The couple enjoyed dancing. Don was a very loving husband and father. They were blessed with three children. He was a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Denison as well as the V.F.W. Shelby County Post #941 and the American Legion Helmer-Reyelt Post #150 both of Harlan. He died February 11, 2010 in Harlan at age 78 years, eight months and one day.

Don is preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his wife Mary Jane of Harlan; his three children, Denise Gubbels and her husband, Phil; David Petersen and his wife, Linda; and Dea Ann Bissen and her husband Roger, all of Harlan; six wonderful grandchildren, Daniel, Ryan, David, Dennis, Brittany, and Hanna; and one beautiful great granddaughter, Mayce; one brother, Robert Petersen and his friend, Marie, of Omaha, NE; one sister, Audrey and her husband, Jack Lambert of Sioux City; nieces and nephews; and many many good friends. They also helped raise approximately 32 foster children.

Funeral services were held Sunday, February 14, 2010, at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Denison with Pastor David Loesch officiating. The message in music was provided by Dianne Furne, organist and Ann

Platt, soloist. Pallbearers were his grandchildren, Daniel Petersen, Ryan Petersen, David Gubbels, Dennis Gubbels, Brittany Bissen, and Hanna Bissen. Military honors were conducted by V.F.W. Shelby County Post #941 and American Legion Helmer-Reyelt Post #150. Inurnment was held at a later date at the St. Clair Cemetery in Ute.

Armstrong Funeral Home

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