



Robert F. Petersen

Robert "Bob" Frederick Petersen was born September 17, 1924, on the family farm southwest of Jacksonville, Iowa to Pete and Alta (Hansen) Petersen. He was baptized and confirmed at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Jacksonville, and was a lifelong member serving on various positions of the church including president, deacon, and treasurer. Robert attended Jacksonville No. 4 School until moving to Poplar for two years while his parents ran the country store. During that time, Bob attended Polk Country School. In 1933, the family moved back to the family farm and Bob once again attended Jacksonville No. 4 until eighth grade. Bob stayed on the farm until he entered the Navy in 1942. Bob was stationed overseas spending time in the Asian front, for the most part Taiwan, on the USS Thuvan. Bob was a Seaman 1st class who worked as a radar operator.

September 26, 1946 Bob married Jean Alice Jacobsen at Bethel Baptist Church in Harlan, Iowa. Three boys were born to this union Steven Lee, (who shared Bob's birthday), James Alan (Jim), and Jeffrey Lynn.

Robert loved his farming operation - raising cattle and growing crops. Even after the love of his life passed away the love of watching things grow is what helped him keep going as his heart was truly broken at losing Jean.

In February of 2000, Bob was fortunate to find love for the second time in his life with Betty Williams. Bob and Betty were so good for each other and as many know, it was so good to see Bob smile again.

In May of 2000, Bob became a first-time Grandpa at age of 76. Olivia Jean (named after Bob's wife) became the apple of Grandpa's eye. Bob then was blessed in May of 2001 with his first Grandson Jack Steven, the first boy to carry on the Petersen name, and then again in May of 2002, with the birth of Thomas Robert, named after Bob.

Bob was a kind and honorable man. He was proud of his farm, his family, his sons, his grandchildren, and his friends. Anyone who met Bob became his friend. He loved planting lots of sweet corn and giving it away to all his friends. As a little boy he purchased 100 pine trees through the mail order and some are still alive on the farm.

In June 2002, Bob was diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer as it had already gone into the bone. But Bob was determined to beat the cancer and said he wanted to fight it because he had such a passion for life and wanted to go fishing with his grandkids.

His first treatment held the cancer at bay and for about four years and Bob was able to enjoy the things he loved, his farming, family, grandkids, Betty and just life in general. Bob then was approached by his doctors in March of 2006 about an experimental drug treatment and had a chance to participate. He said it was worth a shot and maybe by him being in the program, it might help other people such as his sons or grandsons someday. That was Bob always putting friends and family first, such an unselfish man.

Although the appointments were long and many and as Bob endured many pokes, he never complained, always looking toward the future. As the cancer began to resist the treatment, Bob did his best to fight it. Bob entered the hospital on Wednesday, January 31, 2007.

Bob died on Thursday, February 22, 2007, having attained the age of eighty-two years, five months, and five days. He was preceded in death by his parents, Peter and Alta Petersen, and his wife of fifty years, Jean.

Bob is survived by his three sons: Steve and his wife Tamara Petersen; Jeffrey Petersen and his wife Jayne, and James Petersen all of Harlan, Iowa; his grandchildren: Sara, Olivia, Jack, and Thomas; his sister Lotus Mumm of Council Bluffs, Iowa, his special companion, Betty Williams of Harlan, nieces and nephews, other family, and many friends.

Funeral Services were held Saturday, February 24, 2007, at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Jacksonville, Iowa. Pastor Ron Rasmussen officiated the 11:00 AM service. Honorary casket bearers were Dave Mumm, Nancy Mumm, Doug Mumm, Riley Gessert, Walter Murray, James Kemp, Marvel Jacobsen, Lois Hansen, Todd Madsen, and Karen Pavao. Serving as casket bearers were Chad Manz, David Christensen, Tom Lund, Verner Hansen, Beaner Thomsen, Kirk Jacobsen, Don Mumm, and Dale Jensen. Military Rites were held by Shelby County VFW Post No. 941 and the Harlan American Legion Helmer Reyelt Post No. 150 at the Jacksonville Cemetery in Jacksonville, Iowa. Pauley Jones Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.