

Norman Piercy, 87

July 5, 1922 - April 20, 2010

HARLAN — Norman Wilbur Piercy was born on July 5, 1922, to Edgar Wilbur Piercy and Catherine Wilhelmina (Homann) Piercy in Newell. He attended school in Newell, graduating from high school in 1939. He then bought and operated a produce/hatchery business there.

It was during this time that he met and married the love of his life, Mavis Margaret Kinkade, on June 28, 1942, at the bride's parents' farm home in rural Newell. They enjoyed fifty-seven years together. Unfortunately World War II had broken out as the couple courted and were married. Norman sold his business and enlisted in the United States Army, reporting to Camp Dodge in December 1942. Mavis moved to nearby Storm Lake while Norman served three years in the infantry in the Pacific theater (Australia, New Guinea, the Philippines), where he was wounded on April 12, 1945, at Balete Pass in Luzon. He carried shrapnel in his neck for the rest of his life. He received the Purple Heart and was honorably discharged on December 27, 1945. He returned home to his wife in Storm Lake where they made their home together and he began a lifetime career as a livestock buyer of sheep, hogs and cattle for Kingan's (later Hygrade) meat packers. Norman and Mavis welcomed two children into their lives: a son, Rex, born in 1949, and a daughter, Cheryl, born in 1951. In 1962, Norman was recruited to be a buyer for the newly forming Iowa Beef Processors in Denison, and relocated his family to Harlan, which remained the family home. In the course of his work, he drove nearly 60,000 miles a year over southwestern Iowa rural roads, visiting nearly every farm in Shelby County. He continued in this capacity until his retirement in 1985. In retirement he worked part-time for Harlan Municipal Utilities at the water plant. But mostly he spent his years enjoying his gardening and livestock hobbies, and purchasing a small acreage on the edge of Harlan, where he kept sheep, goats, the grandchildren's occasional horse or mule, and lots of cats, plus a small grove of fruit trees. Norman enjoyed traveling and took his family on annual summer vacations by auto to see the great national parks of the western US and Canada. He and Mavis celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary by taking the entire family by train to Winter Park, CO, for a week. The couple also enjoyed many escorted bus tours to places like the Canadian Maritime Provinces, New England, New York, Washington, DC, Florida, as well as two trips to Ireland and one to Hawaii. At home in Harlan, Norman was very active in his church and its Builders Class, serving as an usher and on several committees and boards, including a stint with Mavis as the co-chair of the church's active Missions Committee. In his later years, he also coordinated the acolyting program. He also patiently assisted Mavis in her genealogical pursuits, driving her to many courthouses or cemeteries as she pieced together family history on both sides. In addition, the couple was active in the Shelby County Garden Club and in the county fair, both as an exhibitor, and later (with Mavis) as the superintendent of the Floral Hall. Norman was recognized for his work by the fair board. He also served on the board of the Therkildsen Community Center, was active as a volunteer at the hospital, and delivered Meals on Wheels. After Mavis' death in 1999, Norman remained in his Harlan home until he became a resident of Elk Horn's Salem Lutheran Home in 2004, where he lived until his death. Norman died on Tuesday, April 20, 2010, at Myrtue Medical Center in Harlan, having attained the age of eighty-seven years, nine months, and fifteen days.

In addition to his parents, Norman was preceded in death by his wife, Mavis, and his only sibling, a brother, Loren. He is survived by his son, Rex, and his partner Lee Johnsen of Arlington Heights, IL; his daughter, Cheryl, and her husband Keith Burchett of Harlan; four grandchildren: Jason Piercy and his wife Jennifer of Sioux Falls, SD; Scott Burchett and his wife Kim of Harlan; Ross Burchett and his wife Lee of Harlan; and Leah (Piercy) and her husband Tim Sheldon of Dubuque; six great-grandchildren: Bryce Sheldon, Brittany Sheldon, Makayla Burchett, Katie Burchett, Andy Burchett, and Finn Piercy; his sisters-in-law: Helen Kinkade of Albert City, and Ruby Piercy



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of Storm Lake; several nephews; other family members; and many friends.

Funeral services were held on Monday, April 26, 2010, at the First United Methodist Church in Harlan, with Rev. Dr. David G. Swinton officiating the 10:30 a.m. service. Military Rites were held at the Harlan Cemetery by the Shelby County VFW Post No. 941 and the Harlan American Legion Helmer Reyelt Post No. 150. Serving as casket bearers were: Jason Piercy, Timothy Sheldon, Scott Burchett, Kimberly Piercy, Norman Kinkade, and Ross Burchett.

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