

## Richard Duane Ferry, 80

Feb. 25, 1937 - Aug. 24, 2017



**HARLAN** – Richard is the son of Ray and Ruby (Petersen) Ferry. He was born at home, Shelby County, near Irwin on February 25, 1937. He went to country school, Polk #2, which was located next to his home through the eighth grade. He always had to milk cows and do chores before and after school.

In high school, Richard was the first president of the Irwin FFA chapter and a member of the Polk Panthers 4-H club. He was active in music and was a member of a boy's quartet that entertained many times in the community, performed regularly on WOW TV in Omaha, NE, and KRNT theater in Des Moines. They received 1 ratings at music contest each year. After singing with the Eddy Hadad Orchestra, they were offered a job with the orchestra, but they declined as two were going to college and two were still in high school. Richard was King of the School Carnival and given the title of best groomed boy his senior year. He graduated from Irwin High School in 1955.

The summer following high school graduation, he was a Forest Smoke Ranger in Kallispel, MT. He worked for the Soil Conservation Service in Council Bluffs, before working as a hired hand for Howard Dahlof. The first land he rented was a farm from Benny Hanson.

He served in the Army Reserve program for six years, taking his basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, MO, earning a sharp shooting medal. He was a lifetime member of Disabled American Veterans and a member of Helmer Reyelt American Legion Post #150.

He married Julienne Obrecht, June 25, 1961. They moved to a farm they rented from Dallas Dent, the first place north of Redline. In 1963, they rented from Melvin Petersen and moved to Botna. They bought a farm south of Irwin in 1966. Richard raised hogs and fed cattle along with the grain operation. He was a Cargill Seed dealer for many years, hosted test plots and earned a trip to Hawaii.

He enjoyed hunting and trapping. As a child, he trapped gophers and got paid ten cents a gopher to buy his bicycle. Coyote hunting was a favorite.

Richard and Julienne had two children, Richelle and Brandt. Richard was very involved in each of their lives. Richard enjoyed playing ball, riding motorcycles, playing basketball in the shop, and snowmobiling with his family. Brandt remembers his Dad being his biggest influence to farm. Many times were spent pheasant and coyote hunting, motorcycle rides, planting and harvest, having cows together and working in the shop.

Richard was baptized and joined the Methodist church in Harlan prior to marriage. He served on many church committees including Chairman of the Administrative Board. Richard sang in the church choir, and was a Sunday School teacher and MYF sponsor.

Richard was a lifelong member of Farm Bureau, having served as Membership Chairman. December 2, 1962, Richard was initiated into Sardi Lodge #444 in Irwin. After completing degrees, he became a Master Mason and served as Worshipful Master of the Lodge. February 25, 1963, he was initiated into The Order of the Eastern Star, serving offices including Worthy Patron. Richard was a lifetime member of the Shelby County Historical Society. He retired in 2007 as a director on the board of Nishnabotna Valley REC after serving 30 years, 23 as the President. He also served six years on the Iowa Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, five years as President.

After retiring from farming, he restored several tractors. He liked working in his farm shop building and repairing machinery. He was innovative and could picture improvements for tools and equipment. Richard wanted to retire on the farm and stay productive. He liked helping on the farm.

Richard's grandchildren were his pride and joy and enjoyed spending time fishing, swimming and ice skating at the pond, giving Ranger rides, helping with 4-H projects, having picnics on the porch and following them at their school activities.

Richard died August 24, 2017, achieving the age of 80 years, five months, and 30 days. In addition to his parents he is preceded in death

by his sister Brenda Ferry.

He is survived by his wife Julienne of Harlan; daughter Richelle and her husband Todd Richardson of Detroit Lakes, MN; son Brandt Ferry and his wife Stacia of Kirkman; five grandchildren: Matthew Richardson and his wife Em of Moorhead, MN; Grant Richardson and his wife Meghan of Fargo, ND; Rachel Ferry of Saint James, MN; Gabe Ferry and Kristen Ferry of Kirkman; sisters Betty Zemanek of Cincinnati, OH; Patricia and her husband Peter Steenhusen of Council Bluffs; brother Don Ferry and his wife Jean of Irwin; nieces and nephews; other family members and friends.

An 11 a.m. funeral service was officiated by Rev. Mike Agnew on Monday, August 28, 2017 at the First United Methodist Church in Harlan. Charlie Obrecht, Merle Petersen, Gary Pool, Richard Jones and Robert Schmidt served as honorary casket bearers. Ron Mosher, Matthew Richardson, Cyrus Monson, Wes Ehrecke, John Criss, Gabe Ferry, Grant Richardson and Jeff Zemanek served as casket bearers. Military Rites were conducted by the Harlan American Legion Helmer Reyelt Post No. 150 at the Harlan Cemetery in Harlan.

Pauley Jones Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements.

**Pauley Jones**  
FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION

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