

James Shelton, Sr., 72

May 14, 1933 - Sept. 17, 2005

HARLAN — James Lee Shelton, Sr., the youngest child of Robert and Marjorie Reagan Shelton, was born May 14, 1933, in Centerville. He attended grade school and high school in Centerville and graduated with the class of 1952. He later attended college at Yuba, CA. At age 17, he joined the United States Army, where he served overseas in the Korean Conflict. After receiving his honorable discharge from the Army, he re-enlisted into the United States Air Force where he served overseas during the Vietnam War. In addition to Korea and Vietnam, James served his country honorably for 26 years at various bases in Denver, New Orleans, Turkey, New Mexico, St. Louis, Germany, England, California and finally at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha. After his military career, Jim was employed at the Job Service of Iowa office in Harlan for nearly 20 years. He was a member of the Shelby County VFW Post No. 941 and Helmer Reyelt American Legion Post No. 150 of Harlan and served as the State Commander of the VFW.

Dec. 11, 1964, James married Mary Joan Williams in Ankara, Turkey. Three children were born to this union, Deborah, James, and Pat. After their marriage, the family followed James throughout his military career before settling in Harlan in 1979. In 1994, he was honored as Harlan's Citizen of the Year. He was a member of the United Methodist Church in Harlan. After his retirement from the Job Service, he continued to make his home in Harlan, until 2001, when his illness required him to become a resident of Salem Lutheran Home in Elk Horn. He died Sept. 17, 2005, at Myrtue Memorial Hospital at age 72 years, four months, and three days.

In addition to his parents, James was preceded in death by his brother, Robert Shelton, and his sister, Alice Wicker. Survivors include his wife, Mary Shelton of Harlan; his children, Deborah (Corey) Campbell of Irwin; James Shelton (Dori) of Okinawa, Japan; Pat Shelton (Jennifer) of Harlan; seven grandchildren; his sister-in-law, Ruby Shelton of Enid, OK; and other relatives.

Funeral services were held Sept. 24, 2005, at Pauley Jones Funeral Home with Rev. Orris Drake officiating. Military rites were conducted in the Harlan Cemetery by the Offutt Air Force Base Honor Guard. Casket bearers were Dana Tuma, Todd Parkhurst, Pat Shelton, Steve Wilwerding, James Lee Shelton, Jr., and Corey Campbell.

