



John Joseph Petersen

March 19, 1928 - May 10, 2014

John Joseph Petersen was born March 19, 1928 in Columbus, Nebraska to John and Frieda (Rode) Petersen. John's family moved several times while he was growing up, living in Fremont, Nebraska, California, Wisner, Hooper and finally, Omaha, Nebraska. He attended schools in California, and left Omaha South High School after his sophomore year. John began working at an early age, first working in the lettuce fields in California with his mother, and then riding his bike to deliver Western Union Telegrams.

John enlisted in the United States Army in January 1946, and served until his honorable discharge in July 1947. While in the Army, John drove a truck with kitchen supplies and chauffeured, earning the rank of Private First Class. He also met a good friend in the Army named Milton Hultgren. After his discharge, John visited Milton on the Hultgren family farm outside of Oakland, Nebraska, and met Milt's sister, Helen.

John married Helen Hultgren on March 19, 1949 at the Lutheran Church in Oakland, NE. They were blessed with four children: Tim, Michael, Cheryl, and Scott. John and Helen raised their family in Omaha, near Mutual of Omaha (where Helen worked) until moving to their new home in Elkhorn, Nebraska in 1960. John lived in that same home until becoming a resident of Valhaven in Valley, Nebraska on January 30, 2014.

John worked for Sidles in Omaha for 15 years as a machine shop laborer. He then worked for TriState Spray Equipment Co as a salesman from 1957 until 1975. In 1975, John started Petersen Sales and Service, which he ran with Helen until selling the business in 1986. From 1988 until his retirement in 1998, John worked for the Elkhorn Public Schools as a custodian. Needing to stay busy following retirement, John delivered Meals on Wheels, prescriptions, and flowers for Elkhorn Flower and Gifts for years after.

John was a very energetic person who enjoyed playing horseshoe, cards, working word puzzles, attending stock car races at Sunset Speedway, dining out, and time with his Grandchildren. He loved a good chicken fried steak, and cherry pie. John will be remembered as a man of many talents, who could do almost anything. He had a quick wit, but was often reserved, and could be stubborn.

John died Saturday, May 10, 2014 at Valhaven in Valley, Nebraska at the age of 86 years, one month, and 21 days. He was preceded in death by his parents: John and Frieda Petersen, wife Helen, infant son, Michael, 6 brothers-in-law and 2 sisters-in-law. John is survived by his sons and daughters-in-law: Tim & Kathy Petersen of Elkhorn, Scott & Sharon Petersen of Climax, NC, daughter and son-in-law Cheryl & Steve Zuhlke of Kansas City, MO, 7 grandchildren: Jennifer (Daniel) Golightly, Allison (Zach) Humphreys, David Zuhlke, Ami (Jake) Hightower, Madeline Hightower, Paige Hightower, and Olivia Hightower, and 6 great grandchildren, and sister-in-law Lois Hultgren.

John J. Petersen, age 86, of Elkhorn, died 5/10/14. Preceded in death by wife Helen. Survived by sons and daughters-in-law: Tim & Kathy of Elkhorn, Scott & Sharon of Climax, NC, daughter and son-in-law Cheryl & Steve Zuhlke of Kansas City, MO, 7 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

Funeral service Wednesday, 10:30 AM at Bethany Lutheran Church, Elkhorn.

Interment Prospect Hill Cemetery, Elkhorn, with military honors. Visitation Tuesday at the funeral home from Noon to 8 PM with family receiving friends from 6-8 PM. Memorials to the National Kidney Foundation or Bethany Lutheran Church.

Tribute Wall



“ *John Joseph Petersen*

December 10, 2022 at 09:12 AM



“ *Tim, Cheryl and Scott...very sorry to hear of John's passing, but he was probably just ready to go and be with Helen. We had lots of fun times and have wonderful memories. You will be in our prayers....*

Judy & Laird Lindquist - May 19, 2014 at 10:18 PM



“ *We were saddened to hear the news of your dad passing. He just wanted to be near his wife, that is my thought! Rest in Peace. Prayers to your families from both of us. Dwight and Julie Jarose*

Julie Jarose - May 13, 2014 at 11:03 PM