



Nelson David Harpine (Bolivar)

MAY 5, 1924 - APR 15, 2014



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Nelson David Harpine was born on May 5, 1924, in a two-room, dog-trot log cabin located at a farm-community crossroads known as Holsinger Town near Broadway, VA. He passed from this world April 15, 2014, in his home surrounded by the love of his family South of Bolivar, MO at the age of 89 years, 11 months and 10 days.

He was the middle child of Joseph Luther Harpine and Julia Ogretta (Higgs) Harpine. Growing up in the rich agricultural Shenandoah Valley, he established a strong sense of dedication and loyalty to work, family and community. One of his first common sense decisions was to receive the Lord during the summer, after observing the breaking of the river's ice to baptize a lady on a winter's Sunday.

He graduated from Timberville High School in 1942. He followed with further education at National Youth Administration (NYA), Manassas, VA, Danville Technical School, Danville, VA, Assistant Radio Technician, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA and the U.S. Army Signal Corp.

World War II brought him to the Midwest directing air traffic in Topeka, KS and Kearney, NE. He controlled the maiden flight to the West Coast of the B-29, Enola Gay in Kearney. The Army provided him the beginning of a 36 year career as an air traffic controller with the FAA. He worked in the control towers of Topeka, KS, Omaha, NE, Des Moines, IA, St. Louis, MO, St. Joseph, MO and in 1953 moving to Springfield, MO where he retired in 1979.

While he was in Topeka, KS he met Helen Elizabeth Wescott on a blind date. They fell in love and were married October 16, 1944. To this union was born Douglas Colden in 1947 and Joseph Edward in 1950.

He was deeply involved with the Springfield community with his children, church and other services. He organized the Weblo Cub Scout Pack and was involved with the Boy Scouts Troup 21 both at Study School. He coached basketball at the Boys



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Club. He taught the shorter players to jump then shoot even though he was benched in high school for executing the “jump shot”. He also coached little league baseball for the Springfield Parks Department. He and his family joined the newly formed National Avenue Christian Church in 1955. He was a current member and was deeply involved with the church, with faithful services as Chairman of the Property Department for 15 years. He was bestowed an Honorary Life Deacon for his many years of service. He was a founding member of the West Side Optimist Club, helping to build community centers and ball fields for the west area of Springfield. He also helped organize and establish the Westside Betterment Association, and eventually served the Westside on the Springfield Planning and Zoning Commission from 1980-1986, serving as the Chairman the last two years.

His hobby was woodworking; which included building boats, houses and furniture for family, friends, church and community.

When his wife Helen died in 1987, he knew that he wanted another loving person in his life. He married Barbara Ferguson in 1988. They enjoyed life on their small farm in Polk County, loving each other and their animals. He felt that he was very blessed to have two wonderful loves in his life.

He was preceded in death by his father, mother, brother; Charles “Tuck” Lester, baby sister; Joann and his first wife; Helen.

He is survived by his loving family, including his wife, Barbara; son, Douglas of Burke, VA; granddaughter, Elizabeth “Beth” Harpine Shires of Fairfax, VA; great-grandson, Brooks of Fairfax, VA; soon to be great-granddaughter, Aubrey of Fairfax, VA and son, Joseph of Springfield, MO.

A memorial service honoring Nelson will be planned and announced in August 2014. Memorial contributions may be made in his honor to the donor’s charity of choice.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Nelson by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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