

**Thomas "Tom"
Michael Ellis, 72**

June 4, 1945 - June 6, 2017

HARLAN – Thomas "Tom or Tommy" Michael Ellis was born June 4, 1945 in Sioux City to Thomas and Mable Ellis. At a young age, his family moved to Tryon, NE where his dad worked in the David family store.

Upon graduating from high school, Tom attended Chadron State College for two years. During this time he met and fell in love with Donlinna "Donnie" Vetter from Stapleton, NE. The couple married October 5, 1966 right before Tom enlisted into the Army

on October 10, 1966. To this union three children were born: Michelle Lynee was born in North Platte, NE while Tom was in Vietnam, Todd Michael was born at Fort Sill in Lawton, OK, and Michael James was born in Omaha, NE.

Family was the most important thing to Tom, and he worked very hard to provide for his family. Finding work in safe communities took them from Denver, CO to Imperial, NE and finally to Ogallala, NE where all three kids graduated high school. Once grandkids arrived, Tom and Donnie moved to Harlan to be near Michelle and her husband Roger Thorne and three grandkids Andrew, Ryan, and Samantha. While in Harlan, Tom and Donnie were active in St. Michael's Catholic Church serving as Eucharistic ministers and scripture readers. Tom was also active in the Knights of Columbus in Harlan. Tom and Donnie attended many of the grandkids sports games, music programs, and other activities. Tom took great joy in playfully picking on the grandkids; at family gatherings you'd often hear Donnie saying "Tommy!" in her 'knock it off tone.'

Tom and Donnie, the love of his life, were married for 47 years until she passed in May 2014. Tom retired July 31, 2015, and in February 2016 he moved to Lincoln to live with his son Michael, wife Denise, and grandchildren Katelyn, and Natalie. Bladder cancer took him in a few short months before he had a chance to fight it. Tom passed away on June 6, 2017 in Bellevue, NE having attained the age of 72.

Tom leaves behind his three children and families, Michelle and Roger Thorne, Ryan, and Samantha of Harlan; Andrew and his wife, Samantha Thorne, great-grandchildren Bowen and Sophie of Sioux Falls, SD; Todd and Lisa Ellis, Madison of Omaha; Mike and Denise Ellis, Katelyn, and Natalie of Lincoln, NE; sisters, Lynelle and Dennis Miller of Kearney, NE, and Renee and Norm Greunke of Omaha; many nieces, nephews, cousins, and Aunt Helen Abdouch. Special thanks to Tom's cousin, Mike Abdouch for all of your visits and support during his stay in hospice.

A memorial service will be July 22, 2017, 10 a.m., at St. John's Catholic Church, 304 H St. in Stapleton, NE. Inurnment will be in St. John's Cemetery in Stapleton. Memorials can be left in Tom's name to the Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network (BCAN) - Direct Donation Link: <https://49906.thankyou4caring.org/donatenow>, or to the family.

