



Bruce Arlen Jones, 40

July 26, 1953 - Nov. 25, 1993

Harlan - Bruce Arlen Jones, son of G. Stanley and Gertrude Coglon Jones, was born July 16, 1953 at Audubon. He was baptized April 4, 1954 at the Methodist Church in Audubon and received into full membership of the Methodist Church of Harlan, April 3, 1966. He attended Audubon and Harlan Elementary and Junior High Schools and received his high school diploma with honors from the American Correspondence School of Chicago in Aug. of 1971.

He was afflicted with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy which was diagnosed when he was 18 months of age. He was confined to a wheelchair at the age of eight and spent his last years in an iron lung. He became an avid reader and authored a column entitled, "As I See It", which expressed his thoughts

and philosophies on a variety of topics which proved to be an inspiration to many. His special interests were of history, science, religion, nature and wildlife, politics and sports. In March of 1984, a collection of his essays entitled, *Harvest of a Boundless Mind* was published. In Nov. 1989, he received a hall of fame award from the West Iowa Chapter of the Muscular Dystrophy Association. He was also an honorary member of Harlan's Optimists Club. He died at his home in Harlan Nov. 25, 1993 at age 40 years, four months and nine days.

He was preceded in death by his brother Brian, his maternal grandfather, Ray Coglon and his paternal grandparents, Guy and Nina Jones. Survivors are his parents, his sister and brother-in-law, Donita and David Miller of Harlan, his sister-in-law, Karen Harris of Virginia Beach, VA, a niece and nephew, Cresta and Nathan Jones of Virginia Beach, VA; his maternal grandmother Lena Coglon of Exira and several other relatives.

A private burial service was held Saturday, Nov. 27, 1993 at the Harlan cemetery. A memorial service was held at the First United Methodist Church in Harlan, Dec. 5, 1993 with Rev. Paul N. Wilcox officiating. Eulogies were given by

Guy Thomas Jones, Thomas Noble, Roger Jacobsen, Ryan Burchett and Larry D. LaVelle. Pauley Funeral home in charge of arrangements. Memorial gifts will be sent to the Muscular Dystrophy Association and the national Wildlife Federation.

Harlan, Iowa News advertiser
Friday December 10, 1993, pg 2-B



Bruce in his iron lung home.

Bruce Jones: his life a story of faith and courage and of a caring family

On Thanksgiving Day, Bruce A. Jones passed away at age 40. He was the son of Stanley and Gertrude Jones of Harlan.

When Bruce was 18 months old, he was diagnosed as having muscular dystrophy, a hereditary disease that progressively weakens and destroys the voluntary muscles. In the 1970's he went from a wheel chair to life in an iron lung at the family home. His great faith sustained him through difficult times.

Bruce, through a correspondence course graduated from high school in three years with honors. He was an avid reader with a thirst for knowledge which led him to dictate to his mother many essays covering a great variety of subjects. A sample of his writings appear in his book, titled *Harvest of A Boundless Mind*. It was published in 1984, a copy of which is in the Harlan Community Library. The book contains 76 essays.

In a lengthy forward to the book, his mother wrote the following:

"Bruce realizes the precariousness of his situation, and he has expressed to me a desire that I try to have no regrets because he understands that at some point my best efforts may be futile.

"Bruce has taken responsibility for every detail concerning his funeral service plans. For instance, he wanted to select a gravestone with an appropriate epitaph. At the time of its completion and before installation, Bruce was able to see the finished stone through the thoughtfulness, kindness, and manpower of those who did the work and brought it into his room. The epitaph Bruce chose state, "He Sailed With The Wind," with a clipper ship in full sail. He describes its meaning in these words, "This epitaph is symbolic of my acceptance of muscular dystrophy. By my and others' acceptance and assistance, I was able to gain a fruitful and fulfilling life. I have sailed with the wind of my adversity and have been enabled to travel far with my mind and spirit."

220 Below is the last essay Bruce wrote this past October, shortly before his death.

The Heart of Autumn
October, 1993 — by Bruce Jones

The human spirit has its own seasons similar to nature's seasons of birth, growth, fading, and death. As in nature, we also are renewed and reborn even as we decay and die. We are most in tune with God and the Divine energy when we are most aware and accepting of the cycles of change in ourselves and nature. When we see ourselves as part of the whole, we are better able to relinquish the desire to control life.

Spring is the time of new beginnings and freshness. Summer is the time of vigorous growth and the season of ceaseless activity. Autumn is a time of slowing down, letting go, and waiting. In the fields, the grain is ripe, but not yet harvested, and the reward is not yet certain. To harvest, we must sacrifice the warmth and light of summer and appreciate the shorter, cooler days of fall. Winter is a time of resting, gestation, and quiet as all life awaits the return of the sunlight's vernal warmth.

To me autumn produces more moods than any other time of year and is the richest and most subtle season of the heart. It is a time of retreat, often of mysterious melancholy and nostalgia. At the same time, it is a consummation, and often gives a feeling of fulfillment. Above all else, this autumn is teaching me the gift of contentment. This past year has seen a marked deterioration in my physical condition, and, like autumn, is requiring a higher level of acceptance and satisfaction in the simpler, truer blessings of life. The Shaker hymn, "Simple Gift", suggests that when true simplicity is gained, then we know true freedom.

I give thanks for the soothing and sustaining thoughts springing from human suffering, for the faith and courage that looks through darkness and death to new life, and for the love, joys, and sorrows often lying too deep for words.

This poem by Edward Hays beautifully expresses my thoughts and feelings of this autumnal season, (*Ed. note: poem omitted here.*)

As I observe the waning of the solar light this fall, I await with hope the Advent and the coming of God's Divine Light, the light and life of all seasons of the heart.



The Stanley Jones family. From left, Nathan, Donita and David Miller, Stanley, Gertrude and Cresta. Nathan and Cresta are the children of Bruce's brother, the late Brian Jones.