

John Harold Jessen, 66

Jan. 18, 1933 – Dec. 19, 1999

EXIRA – John Harold Jessen, son of Harold P. and Margaret C. Petersen Jessen, was born Jan. 18, 1933, on his parents' farm in Sharon Township, Audubon County, west of Exira, and died Dec. 19, 1999, at the Audubon County Memorial Hospital at age 66 years, 11 months and one day. He was baptized and confirmed at the Exira Lutheran Church. He attended Elk Horn Community School graduating in 1951. He helped operate the family farm and also played in a band known as the KnappLanders, which played at the opening of KJAN Radio Station.

April 24, 1955, he married Lois Granteer at the Elk Horn Lutheran Church. He farmed in partnership with his father operating the family farm. They were one of the first to develop terrace farming in the county. After Harold retired, John continued to farm and purchased several farms over the years. He also operated his own trucks to transport livestock. He continued farming as long as he was physically able to. He was a member of the Exira Lutheran Church. He was a member of the Farm Bureau and the Small Business Association and the Cattleman's Association. He received a conservation award in the 1970's and just recently received an award in October of 1999.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother-in-law, Donald Olesen. Survivors include his wife, Lois Jessen of Exira; his children, Rhonda (Dan) Kuskulis of Ankeny; Lori Harper of Kansas City, MO; Jeff (Rhonda) Jessen of Kimballton; Ellen (Richard) Brown of Olathe, KS; his grandchildren, Nathan Harper of Kansas City, MO; Ashley Kuskulis of Ankeny; Lisa Jessen of Olathe; Jenny Jessen of Atlantic; David Jessen of Kimballton; his sister, Ruth (Dale) Henriksen of Audubon; his sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law, Lila (John) Wells of Defiance; Pauline Olesen of Casselberry, FL; Marvin Granteer and Shirley (Don) Petersen, all of Co. Bluffs; nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Ray Holmquist Dec. 23, 1999, at the Exira Lutheran Church in Exira. Burial was in St. John's Cemetery west of Exira. Honorary casket bearers were Nathan Harper, Ashley Kuskulis, Lisa Jessen, Jenny Jessen, David Jessen, Gary and Donna Larsen, Wanda Marshall, Virgil Sorensen, Rhonda Jessen and Paul Petersen. Casket bearers were Rhonda Kuskulis, Lori Harper, Jeff Jessen, Ellen Brown, Dan Kuskulis, Richard Brown and David Marshall. Kessler Funeral Home in Exira, in charge of arrangements.