

## George Mathiasen, 94

Oct. 29, 1917 - Dec. 2, 2011

**HARLAN** — George Dale Mathiasen, son of Simon and Annie (Anderson) Mathiasen, was born on October 29, 1917 on a farm outside Harlan. George attended Center Township Country School through the eighth grade and was confirmed at Bethlehem Lutheran Church near Jacksonville. After his schooling, George began his career in farming with his father on the family farm. He planted corn with a team of horses and helped pick it all by hand at harvest time.

March 2, 1937, George was united in marriage to Alma Marie Christensen in Atlantic. Two children were born to this union: Janis and Darrel. After their marriage, they made their

home on the Mathiasen family farm seven miles east of Harlan and just north of Prairie Rose Lake. In addition to row crops, George enjoyed raising livestock especially those "white faced Hereford cattle" as well as black Angus cattle. Many of the cattle he raised were shipped to Chicago through the Omaha Livestock Company. George wanted to see where his cattle were going so he and his dad rode the train to Chicago and back. He purchased cattle throughout the Midwest including trips to ranches in Nebraska, Wyoming, Kansas and Colorado. As time went on and automation on farms increased so did the number of cattle in his feed lots. He invested in a Harvester feeding system with three silos. Along with his son Darrel, George establish a hog confinement business and they were the first Shelby County farmers to sell hogs to the Western Iowa Pork Plant on April 15, 1963. In 1969, George became one of four owners of the Harlan Feed Service Incorporated. He served on the Shelby County Beef Producers Board and in 1974 he was honored as the Cattleman of the Year.

After the marriage of his son Darrel, George and Alma made their home in Harlan where they became members of the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Harlan. He was on the church council when the membership walked down the street from the old church to the new church on 19th Street. George enjoyed fishing trips to Swan Lake and Lake View in Iowa and several lakes in Minnesota. He was always after the big walleye but settled for the occasional big northern. George also enjoyed board games and playing cards especially skaervendsel, pitch, canasta, skip-bo, dominoes and rummy cube. George and Alma spent over twenty winters in Apache Junction, AZ. While in Arizona, George learned macramé and earned a 1st place ribbon in the open class at the Shelby County Fair. He learned to crochet from his granddaughter Tricia and once he had that mastered he was making hot pads, neck scarves and afghans of which one was specially made for a kitty. George also became quite



handy in the kitchen and made great pancakes, tapioca pudding and could bake a delicious frozen pie. George and Alma enjoyed traveling throughout the United States but especially enjoyed a caravan trip to Alaska with ten of their Arizona couples that lasted nearly two months. They also traveled to Hawaii twice and made several trips to his sister Margaret's ranch south of Gillette, WY as well as trips to California and south of the border into Mexico. Throughout his years, George was involved in community service including helping in Council Bluffs during the Missouri River floods in 1952 and again in Audubon during the floods of 1959. Alma died on March 5, 2008, and after her death George remained at home until August 31, 2011 when he made his home at the Salem Lutheran Home in Elk Horn. This is where he died on December 2, 2011 having attained the age of ninety-four years, one month and three days.

In addition to his parents and wife, George was preceded in death by his sisters Margaret Christensen and Norma Lansman. He is survived by his children: Janis and her husband Roger Luoma of Eden Prairie, MN; Darrel Mathiasen and his wife Sharon of Harlan; grandchildren: Elizabeth Luoma, Katherine Evers, Laura Johnson, Rebecca Mathiasen and Tricia Krull; great grandchildren: Sophia, Rachel and Noah Evers, Allie and Jacob Johnson, Kaylie Mathiasen and Kaleb and Zachery Krull; sister, Ruth Rahn of Dallas, TX; brother Donald "Si" Mathiasen and his wife Jane of West Des Moines; nieces and nephews; other relatives and many friends.

Pastor Steven Chellew officiated the 10:30 a.m. funeral service on Tuesday, December 6, 2011 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Harlan. Music was provided by Lisa Meyer. Serving as casket bearers were Rod Owens, Kirk Jacobsen, Jeff Lansman, Fred Nelson, Doug Robinson, and Jeff Petersen. Interment was held at the Harlan Cemetery.

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