

## Fred J. McKee, 90

July 14, 1917 - Feb. 10, 2008

**HARLAN** — Fredrick Jacob McKee was born on July 14th, 1917, in Oskaloosa, IA, the son of Howard and Ann (Ott) McKee. He attended grade school in Oakville, IA, where his father had a movie theater and feed store (and sold Purina Chow). In 1929, they moved to Mediapolis, IA, to run a feed and farm supply store (again selling Purina Chows). Fred's dad was a dealer for 27 years, so you can see why Fred had checkerboard corpuscles. Fred graduated from Mediapolis High School in 1935.

Fred married Anita Bamsey in Columbus, NE, on April 26, 1948. Fred loved sports, especially baseball and basketball, as well as music. He was a "pretty good" ball player - four years in high school and five years on independent teams. He received his Iowa High School officiating license for basketball and baseball the day he graduated from high school which was very unusual. Fred and Dr. Markham were very instrumental in getting girls basketball in Harlan (they didn't win any popularity contests from a few people).

Fred's career with Purina really started back in the 1940's when A.D. Hayes Company of Mt. Pleasant hired him to build the "feed business" in five markets for this company - Danville, Yarmouth, New London, Mt. Pleasant and Eldon. He didn't get to Eldon much because there was too much to do in those other markets. He must have done a pretty good job because Ralston Purina honored him and he hadn't been there a year yet. "Hours" didn't mean anything to this guy. He was always on the run "Plugging the Checkerboard." Fred trained with Ben Karr in Princeton, IL, and when Ben was made sales manager of Iowa and Nebraska, he brought Fred with him. He had one dealer (a lady) in Persia, IA, shipping ten tons (Purina) and \$100 (wholesale) of health products a month when he had to throw in the sponge. In his 37 years in Harlan managing Crawford, Carroll, Audubon, Shelby and sometimes Harrison counties (he had it 4 times in his time Ha!). With twenty-two dealers, he shipped 806,000 tons of Purina Chows (concentrates), \$7,280,000 (Wholesale) of health aids. If you want to take the 806,000 tons of concentrates and put that into "Complete" feeds you would have 3,224,000. How about that? So much for Fred's Purina career.

Fred spent 37 years overseas with the 75th "Seabees" attached to the Marine Corps. They spent D-Day at Bougainville, Leyte and Summar during World War II. Fred was a good contributor for the Harlan Community, probably more than a lot of people realize. He contributed some sizeable amounts to the Congregational United Church of Christ, the Vets Building, baseball field, Myrtue Memorial Hospital, Corley Hall, Boys and Girls Scouts, McKee Community Room at the Elm Crest Retirement Community, girls basketball and Little League baseball. He didn't turn down too many things that pertained to the helping of the Harlan Community. He would like to leave you some words of advice in his favorite saying: "Don't look back . . . there may be somebody chasing you." Fred died on Sunday, February 10, 2008, at Myrtue Medical Center in Harlan, IA, having attained the age of ninety years, six months, and twenty-seven days.

Fred was preceded in death by his parents and his wife. He is survived by one son, William "Bill" Flodine and his wife Maryanne, who live in Sparks, NV, one granddaughter, Tammi Cole of Riverside, CA, three great-granddaughters, other family members, and many friends.

Funeral services were held on Saturday, February 16, 2008 at the Congregational United Church of Christ. Pastor Donna Ewert officiated the 10:30 AM service. Acting as members of the Honorary Sports Team were Joel Osborn, Jeff Bissen, Mitch Osborn, Heath Stein, and Mark Blum. Serving as Special Honorary Casket Bearers were Woody Truman, Jeff Branstetter, and Bob Raue. Honorary Casket Bearers were Lloyd Stein, Don Plagge, Bruce Burger, Don Schomers, Ruby Murray, Jack Smart, E.J. Palmer, Merle Norris, Fred Olsen, Joe Kouri, Kenny Kolbold, Mel Book, John Zerbe, Andy Anderson, Bob Bissen, Roger Claypool, Leon DeDonder, Leroy Anastasi, Loren Ilg, Jim Schaben, Sr., John Vanderheiden, Dick O'Bryan, Jim Sweeney, Paul Leinen, Jr., and Leo Goeser. Serving as active Casket Bearers were Carl Nethers, Dave Walter, Charlie Kiersch, Jason Rau, Dave Schomers, John Bolton, Kenny Holloway, Pat Deren, Jerry Chamberlain, and Vicki Fagan. Military Rites were held at the Harlan Cemetery in Harlan, Iowa with the American Legion Helmer Reyelt Post No. 150 and Shelby County V.F.W. Post No. 941 present.



*Pauley Jones*

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