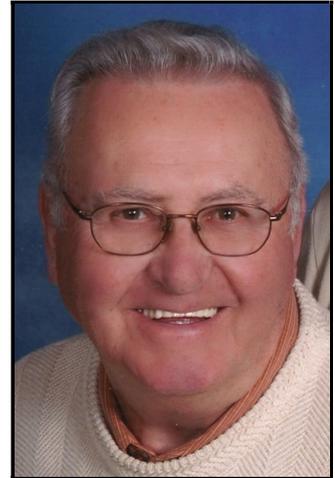


Merle Ruben LaCoursiere
November 16, 1934 ~ September 20, 2018 (age 83)

On September 20, 2018, Merle LaCoursiere, entered peacefully into the arms of his heavenly father. He was a devoted husband and father of three children and was surrounded by his loving family at home at the age of 83.

Funeral Mass will be at 11:00 a.m., Saturday October 6, 2018 at St. Philips Catholic Church, Bemidji, MN with Fr. Chuck Huck officiating. A time of sharing will be 5-7 p.m., Friday, October 5, 2018 at the Olson-Schwartz Funeral Home with a 7 p.m. prayer service. Family will greet friends one hour prior to the service at the church. Inurnment will be in Holy Cross Cemetery, Bemidji.

Merle was born November 16, 1934 in Lambert Township, Brooks, MN. He married his beloved sweetheart Alice Vollen at St. Xavier Catholic Church in Oklee, MN on October 1, 1955. He died 10 days short of their 63rd anniversary. They raised one son, Scott and daughters, Diane and Susan.



Their first few years of marriage, they had a farm raising dairy cattle near Oklee. They then moved to North Dakota where he worked for the Clairmont Construction Company in Walhalla, ND until 1958. He also worked for Paige Brothers in New Rockford, ND. They then moved to Bemidji where Merle was a Desk Sergeant for the Bemidji Police Department and served on the Bemidji Fire Department. In 1961, Merle saw a need for saving people's lives when he and Alice purchased one ambulance starting the Bemidji Ambulance Service. He designed and fabricated the interior of his ambulances. Merle unconditionally devoted 30 years to saving people's lives and teaching first responders. While in the ambulance business, he served on the Northwest Board of Directors for the Minnesota Ambulance Association. His proudest accomplishments were being able to witness the growth and relocation of the ambulance service in Bemidji passing the business to his son, Scott and grandson, Andrew. He retired in 1985. In addition, he and Alice owned Southview Terrance Mobile Home Park and Campground until 1986.

Merle had a lifelong passion for the outdoors. He loved hunting, fishing on the Mississippi River, trapping and enjoyed long weekends camping with family and friends. He was a skilled woodworker creating beautiful cabinetry and lathe work, enjoyed flying model airplanes, playing electric guitar, and had a passion for weekend getaways on his motorcycle with Alice and friends. He especially enjoyed their travels to Alaska during three different summers and fishing on the Kenai River. He will always be remembered for having a joke for every occasion.

He and Alice thoroughly enjoyed 29 years of wintering in Pharr, Texas up until 2016.

He is survived by his wife Alice, his three children, Scott (Jeanne) , Diane (John) Svendsen & Susan (Lynn) Hooper, grandchildren Andrew, Angela, Amanda, Jason, Isabel and 2 great grandchildren Maggie & Mason, brothers Leonard (Helen) & Gary (Sue) , sister Delia Nistler, and several cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Merle was preceded in death by his mother and father, Hector and Alice Lambert LaCoursiere.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to St. Philips Catholic School.

Online guestbook at www.OlsonSchwartzFuneralHome.com