



Robert Merle Blackwell

November 16, 1926 - November 24, 2016

Robert Merle Blackwell, Sr.90, of Forest City, IL, died at 4:20 am Thursday, November 24, 2016 at Havana Health Care in Havana, IL.

Known as Merle, he was born November 16, 1926 in Batchtown, IL to Thomas and Catherine Megar Blackwell. Merle married Doris LaVonne Billings on May 16, 1948. She preceded him in death. He is also preceded in death by his parents, two sisters, one brother, and three sons.

He is survived by one son, Rodney Blackwell, one daughter, Michelle Batty, nine grandchildren, four step-grandchildren, and numerous great-grandchildren.

Merle started life as a farmer before enlisting in the U.S. Army. He also worked as a truck driver and as a school bus driver before becoming employed by the State of Illinois as a bridge tender. He transferred from there to become a bridge mechanic and moved to Forest City, IL in 1967. He made Forest City his home doing such things as being one of the original members of the organization that founded Forman Ambulance. Merle volunteered with this organization for several years and obtained his E.M.T. license during this time. He was also a member of the Village Council in Forest City before becoming the Mayor and Police Chief. Merle was instrumental in purchasing and developing both parks in Forest City.

Merle was an avid fisherman his entire life and loved the outdoors.

Visitation will be held from 5:00 to 7:00 pm Wednesday, November 30, 2016 at Maas-Hurley Funeral home in Manito.

A graveside service will be held at 11:00 am Saturday, December 3, 2016 in Bowling Green cemetery in Bowling Green, Missouri.

Memorial contributions may be made to the donor's choice.

On line condolences may be made to www.hurleyfh.com

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **30**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Maas Hurley Funeral Home - Manito

301 S. Washington St.

P.O. Box #442

Manito, IL 61546

(309) 968-6157

<https://www.hurleyfh.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Robert Merle Blackwell*

October 12, 2022 at 03:07 PM



“ *So sorry to hear of Catfish hunter passing away. Used to see him fishing all the time. I helped take care of him at the nursing home this summer. May you rest in peace. My prayers to the family.*



Pam Pratt - November 28, 2016 at 07:54 PM



“ *Sorry for your loss our thoughts are with you all at this difficult time*



Lacey/Schaad Family - November 28, 2016 at 01:50 PM



“ *I always will remember the reunions at Beardstown and Forest City. He was a very nice man. you have my sympathies*

Jeff Schmitt

Jeff Schmitt - November 27, 2016 at 06:01 PM

JO

“ Sorry for your families loss. Ray and Jodi
McSchooler



Jodi - November 27, 2016 at 05:51 PM



“ Judy Lacer lit a candle in memory of Robert
Merle Blackwell



Judy Lacer - November 27, 2016 at 05:26 PM



Both Norm & I though a lot of Merle. He was a special guy and always
had a smile and a comment when you saw him. May he rest in peace.

Judy Lacer - November 27, 2016 at 05:28 PM

PO

“ Great guy! Always brought a smile to your
face when he was around.



peggy ogden - November 27, 2016 at 01:04 PM

CC

“ So sorry for your loss. So many memories and laughter from this feisty old man. Thoughts are with you.



Carla Case - November 27, 2016 at 12:36 PM



“ Every year at IDOT, he would have a corn boil at our District office. He would provide the corn and cook it for the whole office. It was so good.

I never forgot one story he told when he was bridge tender on the Franklin St. bridge. A car slid down when attempting to cross the bridge as it opened to allow a barge through. The car slid down into cavity as the deck rose 'A' for the river traffic. Merle took a ladder and climbed into the well with the vehicle and driver. Even though there were gas fumes all around the drunk driver sat calmly smoking. When Merle questioned him about the accident the driver responded: I would of made it, but I lost traction.

Nelson Teichmann - November 27, 2016 at 10:52 AM

RH

“ Always like Merle, he had stories that only he would know how to tell. Years back when he worked for the State, he made it possible for the Fire Dept. to obtain at no cost there First Rescue Truck, and made sure it was in good condition. For us older, he will be missed. What a great guy to know. So to His family, thanks for all he done for others.

Ronald Handke - November 26, 2016 at 10:51 PM



Jennifer
Gordon

“ *Momma Michelle. ... sorry to hear about your dad... he was such a great man and without a doubt I know he's holding your mommas hand right now... love you all!* ”

Jennifer Gordon - November 26, 2016 at 03:39 PM



“ *really going to miss this old guy he has been in our lives for many years a real good friend and neighbor thoughts and prayers with the family tim jan and the rest of the danner family* ”

Jan Danner - November 26, 2016 at 11:58 AM