



## Ralph Merideth Jr.

April 18, 1933 - December 8, 2025

Ralph W. Merideth Jr., age 92, passed away December 8, 2025 at the Methodist Manor in Storm Lake, Iowa, ten days before his wife died.

He was born April 18, 1933, at the homestead in Cherokee County, Iowa, a son of the late Ralph Sr. and Bessie (Aldrich) Merideth.

Ralph served his country in the Marines during the Korean war. They were headed over when a treaty was signed. The war ended and the ship turned around heading back to Japan.

After the war he met Arbie Zupp, the love of his life. They were married on June 3, 1955 in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints on Clark Street in Cherokee, Iowa. In 1958 they were blessed with their first child, a daughter, and in 1960 their second daughter.

Ralph was called to the office of Priest on October 5, 1969 and to the office of Elder on October 9, 1983. He and his wife were Zions League Leaders for a few years.

They settled in Calumet, Iowa, where Ralph started working for Christensen Brothers., Inc. in Cherokee, Iowa. He started as a heavy equipment operator and later settled full time as a crane operator building bridges.

He brought a big turtle home and was in the basement butchering it. We had to try everything they cooked. He took the heart and had us hold it in our hand to feel it still beating. Yep, that was dad. He would take the air sack out of a fish and let it dry. That was our toy for a while until it would deflate. He had no boys so us girls experienced his world too. He climbed the biggest tree in the yard and hung a rope on a sturdy limb and tied a gunny-sack to the rope. That was the best swing ever. The town kids would come to swing on it also. The old tree started to give-way so he climbed it again and wrapped a big log chain around the two branches to hold it together so it would last us longer.

Ralph retired from Christensen's and he & his wife bought an acreage East of Sutherland. He farmed 30 acres of land, had a few milk cows, sheep, pigs, 2 horses, rabbits, chickens, Peacocks, and his beloved goats. He loved his goats. Ralph could build anything. He built his wife a new home, with the help of his wife and two daughters, just North of the old house. He could tear apart anything and if he did not have the right tool, he would make one. He loved hunting, fishing, growing a garden, camping, and precious family time.

He loved the Open-Road on his Harley Davidson Panhead. He and his wife rode many miles, visiting relatives in other States. His wife Arbie would lean up and tell Ralph, "Give'em the pipes, dad, give'em the pipes" and of course he always honored her wishes.

While farming, he started his own business, Merideth Ditching. He bought a backhoe and started by laying clay tiles in the ditch he dug, then through hard work he was able to purchase a tiling machine that used the black rolls of tile. This was a relief for him as there were fewer trips in and out of the ditch.

This kept him very busy until his retirement when he and his wife bought a home near Adrian, Missouri. They sold that home to move to Westport,

Oregon and rented an apartment for six months to spend time with their grandson. They came back to Missouri and bought a home in Holden to be closer to their daughter and their grandchildren. A few years later they moved to Independence and sold their home in Holden. They loved to travel and did not spend too much time at one place. They eventually settled back in Iowa and resided at the Methodist Manor where he passed away.

Ralph is preceded in death by his father, Ralph Sr. and his mother, Bessie; five sisters, Bonnie (Albert) Taylor, Dorothy (Mac) McCarty, Maxine (Clarence) Magnussen, Phyllis (Buster) Lee, and Lorraine (Paul) Galvin.

He is survived by his two daughters, Toni (Charles) Gilmore, Janelle (Dale) Jensen and, five grandchildren, Travis Cox, Bre Gilmore, Adam (Tasha) Cox, Aaron (Jennifer) Jensen, and Angela (Jacob) DeWitt and 19 great grandchildren, Kylie, Damon, HayLee, Millie, Harper, Addie, Aubrey, Kinzley, Reghan, Dax, Logan, Emelyn, Lydia, Titus, Annabelle, Rebecca, Ethan, Clara and Lily.

Graveside services will take place Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at Oakhill Cemetery in Cherokee. The Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home in Storm Lake is in charge of the arrangements.

# Cemetery Details

## Oak Hill Cemetery -- Cherokee, IA

Cherokee, IA 51012

# Previous Events

## Graveside Service

JUN 3. 10:00 AM (CT)

Oak Hill Cemetery  
1601 W Main St  
Cherokee, IA 51012  
(712) 225-3535

# Tribute Wall

FH

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Fratze & Jensen Funeral Home - June 02 at 10:48 AM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Ralph Merideth Jr..



May 30 at 12:09 PM

PR

“ Ralph had a hay rack that needed unloaded and John & Norma Johnson were going to go help him unload it. Mike & I found out about it and we went out and helped get it done before it got wet. Norma & Arbie watched our boys and handed us some lemonade when we got done. Thanking us for the help. The friendship was made and we enjoyed talking to them when we seen them.

Penny Rounds - May 22 at 10:52 AM

TO

*I love hearing these memories!*

Toni - May 22 at 03:55 PM