



## Vernon Lee Ayres

April 4, 1928 - November 21, 2012

Vernon Lee “Vernie” Ayres, age 84, passed away Wednesday, November 21, 2012. Vernie was born April 4, 1928 to Alan Vernon Ayres and Leora Ada Ayres of Jasper, Missouri. He was a graduate of Jasper High School, Class of 1946. After high school, he and two buddies left Jasper and joined the United States Marine Corps, being stationed at El Toro Air Base in California. He served from 1946 to 1949. On July 27, 1951, he married Mary Francis Hodkin in Carthage. She preceded him in death in March 28, 2007. Vernie and Mary enjoyed many years of fun and excitement with friends until they were “blessed” with children! Vernie was first a lineman, then an installer, for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company for over 30 years before he retired in 1985. During his life he enjoyed the annual trip to the “deer woods” with his buddies, affectionately known as the “Huckleberry Angels”. He always came home with a week’s worth of whiskers smelling like a campfire, but never brought home a deer! The thing that influenced him more than anything was music. From his high school band and chorus, to the Marine Corps band, then later singing barbershop music, his love of music spanned many decades. He was a member of the Barbershop Harmony Society and over the years was in the TriStatesmen chorus and several quartets, including the Rumble Seat 4 and the Freistatt Spielers. Vernie had a “Tuesday night date” (for singing) with longtime friend, John Reynolds, for over 30 years. Vernie lived a full life. He was known by many as the man with the handlebar mustache, that tilled gardens, that played Santa Claus for his friends’ kids and the guy that sang

barbershop music. He was involved in the family farm in Jasper as a young man, and raised beef cattle on his own for many years. He was a member of the Telephone Pioneers, the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America, and the National Rifle Association. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary, his parents and his brother, Floyd Eugene "Tuney" Ayres. He is survived by a son, Paul Ayres and his wife, Stephanie; a daughter, Amy Priester, and her husband Mark; grandsons, Randy Ayres, Andrew Ayres and Cameron Priester; granddaughter, Devon Priester; great-granddaughter, Addison Ayres; and a host of nieces and nephews. Vernie is also survived by a tremendous group of extended family and longtime friends. Graveside services will be 2:00 p.m. Friday, November 30, 2012 at Park Cemetery in Carthage. Visitation will be 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Thursday, November 29, 2012 at the Ulmer Funeral Home. Online condolences may be sent at [www.ulmerfh.com](http://www.ulmerfh.com). Arrangements are under the direction of the Ulmer Funeral Home.

# Tribute Wall

GC

“ *Vernon Lee Ayres*

George & Carolyn Carder - February 02, 2015 at 10:10 AM

DR

“ *Earlene, Ted and Family, We wish to express our sincere sympathy at this sad time. Ted was such a gentleman and so very pleasant to work with. We know you will all miss him, but also know that you will have many happy memories to share.*

Dick and Marilyn Ruestman - March 11, 2014 at 10:54 AM

TS

“ *Teresa Was so sorry to hear this. Time and life have a way of getting away from us. My thoughts and prayers are with you and yours. Love ya! Toni*

Toni Seymour(Stafford) - February 27, 2013 at 01:27 PM

JW

“ *I got to know Vernie when I worked in Carthage several years ago. He always had a smile, a kind word for everyone and was a wonderful friend.*

John Willmann - November 28, 2012 at 09:58 AM

LK

“ *When I first came to sing with the TriStatesmen Barbershop Chorus, it was Vernie who kinda took me under his wing and helped me learn my part as a fellow baritone, and helped give me the confidence I needed to stay with it and become better. He always had a joke to share (and some of them were even funny). He was a good friend and he will be missed.*

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**Loren Kemmery** - November 27, 2012 at 03:18 PM

SB

“ *Dear Paul, Amy, & family,  
I'm very sorry to hear about your loss Vernie was a fine man with many talents. I will keep you in my thoughts and prayers.*

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**Scott Bridges** - November 26, 2012 at 05:58 PM

RW

“ *How well I remember singing in quartets with Vernie, Tunie, and Tolbert Peterson in high school. Then again a few years ago after the Maple Leaf Festival, we did a bit of playing around again. He will be missed by many.*

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**Ralph Wood** - November 25, 2012 at 08:23 AM