



Alton Leroy Bertschinger

January 13, 1932 - November 27, 2024

SHARE:



SEND FLOWERS **SEND CARD**

[ORDER FLOWERS FOR THE FAMILY](#) [SHOW YOUR SYMPATHY TO THE FAMILY](#)

[GUESTBOOK](#) [CONDOLENCES](#)

ALTON'S OBITUARY

Alton Leroy Bertschinger passed peacefully in his sleep early Wednesday morning November 27th, 2024. He was 92.

Born on his parents' Nebraska farm on January 13, 1932, eldest of Lyona (nee' Hammond) and Wallace Bertschinger's 4 children, he attended the one-room country school near there and then high school at St Ludger's Academy in Creighton, Nebraska. While in high school, he worked part time for the local pharmacist, then chose the Navy after graduation. In June of 1956, Alton married Barbara Frances Schramm, who had been his sister's roommate in Nurses Training at Mount Marty Hospital. Their daughter was born in Yankton, SD in June of 1957 while Alton was at sea. Their son was born in October of 1959 in Chula Vista, CA while Alton was stationed at San Deigo. While Alton saw sea duty over much of the world, his shore side bases also took the family to the Chicago area Great Lakes Naval Station and the U.S. Naval Submarine Base Key West in Florida. His last duty station was as Navy Recruiter in Grand Island, Nebraska, where several times he earned the honor of "Recruiter of the Year". His affection, pride, and enthusiasm for the US Navy's Submarine Service were contagious. His son and a grandson answered that same call.

Like most Navy submariners, Alton was gone a LOT and for long stretches when assigned to sea duty status. A sea bag was always packed and ready. He kept in touch with frequent letters that arrived in batches both to and from his wife at home. Homecomings were like Christmas and birthdays all at once. Alton took a movie camera with him and filmed ever so many spools of tape. A natural storyteller with a sharp wit and sense of humor, it was wonderful to watch his films as he narrated where he'd been, what he'd seen, who he'd been with and what they'd done. (Well, maybe MOST of it...) When in port, he was a devoted husband and father. He and Barbara had an active social life with friends both Navy and Civilian. (So many of these friendships would continue throughout their lives.) They would go dancing and out on the town together, showing their children how to prioritize and treat each other well, then spend time as the family unit, sometimes travelling and "playing tourist", other times picnicking and going fishing. They taught both children the importance and responsibilities of family, friendship, and faith.

The Navy Recruiting assignment move brought him within reasonable driving distance of both his and Barbara's families. There were many weekends spent back and forth, making it possible for his children to know their grandparents and many of their cousins, aunts, and uncles. Alton was always the one his parents, siblings, and others would call on when something important needed to be done or dealt with. He would make the time to be there, supportive on so many levels. He and Barbara also bought a camper trailer, making many family weekend memories at lakes and campgrounds over the years.

Alton - or "Bert" as he was usually known, made a 20-year career of the Navy, then moved to Hill City, SD where he "retired" as Chief Petty Officer to civilian life and eventually civil service working progressively in several positions, primarily affiliated with Ellsworth Air Force Base.

He was mostly home during his children's high school years, able by example to teach his children the value and importance of a solid work ethic. Once he started working at Ellsworth Airforce Base, Alton made sure his children were able to attend Catholic school in Rapid City, leaving home extra early so he could deliver them to school and still make it across town to the base for his own job, then collecting them before heading back to Hill City.

Ever straightforward, as fair as he knew how to be, duty, truth, and honor were paramount to him. He always had an opinion. People may or may not have agreed with him, but they always knew where he stood. He once said his favorite book was "Ivanhoe". Alton strived always to live up to the high values portrayed by the lead character in that book and expected, or at least hoped, that others would do the same.

Forever curious, he fostered that same sense of wonder in his family. Where might be found more good places to hunt and fish? What might be at the end of the road? Where do the ants go? What might happen if we make it this way instead... Everything from cooking to fixing things, he taught us how to figure stuff out, think things through and not be afraid to try something new.

In their later years, Alton and Barbara traveled the country and the world together before the 2019 accident that made Barbara mostly homebound. Until the end of his days, he was forever planning the next adventure. Now they are on it together.

We love you, Dad.

Your children, Bob and Terri

Blessed Repose and Eternal Memories.

Alton was preceded in death by Barbara, his wife of 68 years, as well as his parents, his brother and two sisters, and one great grandchild. Alton is survived by his son and daughter, 4 grandchildren, and 4 great grandchildren, as well as by numerous nieces and nephews.

Services are scheduled at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church in Keystone, SD, with the Rosary being offered Thursday evening December 5th at 5 pm and the Mass of Christian Burial on Friday December 6th at 10 am.

In lieu of flowers, please send any memorial donations to the Knights of Columbus at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church or any US Veteran's organization of your choice.

To send a flower arrangement in memory of **Alton Leroy Bertschinger**, please [click here to visit our sympathy store](#).

ROSARY

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
Catholic Church



Thursday, December 5, 2024



5:00 PM



[Email Details](#)

[DIRECTIONS >](#)



Keystone, SD 57751

MASS OF CHRISTIAN BURIAL

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
Catholic Church



Friday, December 6, 2024



10:00 AM



[Email Details](#)

[DIRECTIONS >](#)



Keystone, SD 57751

SEND FLOWERS

Express your condolences with
flowers sent to Alton's family

[ORDER ONLINE >](#)

GUESTBOOK

Share your thoughts and
memories of Alton

[VIEW & SIGN >](#)

SYMPATHY CARD

Share your thoughts and
memories with family and friends
of Alton

[VIEW OBITUARIES](#)



SEND TO FAMILY

[OSHEIM & SCHMIDT FUNERAL HOME](#)

OSHEIM & SCHMIDT FUNERAL HOME

2700 Jackson Boulevard
Rapid City, SD 57702
☎ 605-343-0077

© 2018 - 25 [Osheim & Schmidt Funeral Home](#). All Rights Reserved.
[Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy](#)
Funeral Home Website by [Batesville®](#)