

Bittner, Alvin

Alvin Earl Bittner, 78, of Battle Creek and formerly of Elkton, died on Monday, April 2, 2001, at Laurels of Bedford in Battle Creek. He was born on March 8, 1923, in Elkton to the late Gustave and Edna Marie (Error) Bittner. He graduated from Elkton High School in 1941, where he earned letters for baseball and basketball. In his senior year he was voted most valuable player in both sports. On July 19, 1947, he married Harriet L. Strom in Berrien Springs. Alvin served in the United States Marine Corps for three years during World War II and attained the rank of technical sergeant. He served in the Pacific Theater. He received the Sharp Shooter Medal, the Marine Corps Bayonet, Rifle and Grenade Medal, the Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic/Pacific Campaign Medal with two Bronze Stars, the World War II Victory Medal and the Navy Presidential Unit Citation. Alvin was employed as a bus driver with the Pennfield Public Schools in Battle Creek for 10 years and retired from there in 1986. He was also an Elkton village council member from 1964 to 1972, Elkton police commissioner for two years, parks and recreation commissioner for eight years, Oliver Township fire fighter for 28 years, Elkton ambulance driver and attendant for eight years. He was an Elkton Rotarian for 18 years with 15 years perfect attendance, and he was a past president and secretary. He was a charter member since 1946 of the Elkton VFW Post No. 6013 where he was past commander and drill sergeant for 28 years. Alvin was a member of the Elkton United Methodist Church for 22 years where he served as chairman of the board and as a trustee. He ushered for 11 years. He managed a Little League team for eight years and umpired baseball and softball for 29 years. He refereed basketball for two years. He operated the down box for Laker football for 15 years and was president of the Laker Athletic Association for a year. He especially enjoyed driving the school bus for Pennfield Schools athletic teams. He operated the scoreboard at football games at Pennfield until 1994. After retirement, he volunteered at the VA Medical Center in Battle Creek and at the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen. He enjoyed all sports. He especially enjoyed watching his grandchildren perform in sports and band. He is survived by his wife, Harriet L. Bittner of Battle Creek; son Dennis Alvin Bittner of Battle Creek; daughters, Diane Harriet Hawk, and Lorraine Anne Wagley, both of Fort Wayne, Ind.; sister, Ina Holcomb of Thomson, Ga.; brothers, Herbert Bittner of Harbor Beach and Arnold Bittner of Saginaw; seven grandchildren; several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Gustave and Edna Error Bittner; sisters, Vernetta Bittner, Wilma Werner, Betty Lou Stensrud and Hilda Schmidt; brothers, Walter, Richard and Larry Bittner. Funeral services will be at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 5, 2001, at the Bachman Funeral Chapel on 223 N. Bedford Road in Battle Creek with Pastor Bruce Kintigh of the Christ United Methodist Church officiating. Interment will be in Fort Custer National Cemetery in Ross Township. Visitation is from 2 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m. today at the funeral chapel. Memorials may be made to Christ United Methodist Church Sunday School carpet fund or the charity of the donor's choice.