



## Vern T. Groesser

August 11, 1920 - July 3, 2015

Vern Thoreson Groesser, 94, of Traverse City, went to be with our Lord on Friday, July 3, 2015, at his home surrounded by his son and devoted granddaughter.

Vern was born on August 11, 1920 in Traverse City, Michigan, to the late Harry and Tillie Groesser.

Vern graduated from Traverse City Central High School in 1938. After spending over a year of work as a switchboard installer for Western Electric in Detroit, Michigan, he enlisted in the Army in 1942. Vern served as a Communications Technical Specialist in the 5th Fighter Command of the Air Force Division of the Army. He served in Okinawa, New Guinea, the Philippines and Australia while serving in WWII. He was honorably discharged in 1946. For his service to our country, Vern received the Victory Medal, American Theater Ribbon, Asiatic Pacific Theater Ribbon with three bronze battle stars, Philippine Liberation Ribbon with one bronze battle star, four overseas service bar, and one service stripe.

Vern married Dorothy Manville on August 10, 1947. They welcomed a son, Jerry, on January 10, 1950. The marriage ended in divorce in 1955.

In 1958 Vern met his life-long partner, Eunice Bagnol at a dance hall and following a courtship, Vern and Eunice married on May 2, 1960, in Traverse City, Michigan. Vern became the stepfather to her son, the late Harold Laird, and she the stepmother to his son, Jerry Groesser.

After several career choices, Vern's love of working on trucks led him to a life-long career in automotive repair. He eventually opened a garage with his best friend, Basil Seiffert, on Cherry Bend Road for many years.

One of Vern's most enjoyable past times was riding in his beloved 1949 Studebaker through the Boardman River Valley. The second most enjoyable past time for Vern was watching his beloved Tigers play baseball. The highlight of 2014 was when his granddaughter, Kelly, took him to see the Tigers in September for his first home game ever. He also enjoyed going to local games for the Beach Bums of Traverse City, Michigan. Vern enjoyed working on various projects for friends and neighbors. Anyone who ever met Vern, loved him for the genuine caring person that he was.

The last two years of Vern's life were medically challenged. His loving granddaughter, Kelly Laird, moved in with him and Eunice so that they may stay in their home and enjoy

the comfort of each other for the rest of their days. Vern fought long and hard to regain his strength after suffering a broken neck in June of 2013. During his struggle to regain his health, he joined Vital Step at Munson Community Medical Center and attended exercise therapy three to five days a week. He kept up this fight until just a few days before his death.

Vern loved his family unconditionally. His pride and joys were his son, stepson, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

Vern was a member of Traverse City Eagles, a lifelong member of Traverse City VFW, Traverse City Elks Club, and the American Military League of Traverse City.

Vern touched many lives with his unconditional love and giving nature. He will be remembered for his selflessness and his unending willingness to help people. Vern will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Vern was preceded in death by his wife of 55 years, Eunice Bagnel Groesser; his father, Harry Groesser; his mother, Tillie Thoreson Groesser; his stepson, Harold Laird; his sister, Eileen; and his brothers, Harry, Chap, and Gary.

Surviving Vern is his beloved son, Jerry (Joanne) Groesser; brother, Robert (MaryEllen) Groesser; Mary his grandsons, Mike (Barb) Laird and Todd (Corianne) Laird; his granddaughter, Kelly Laird; his great grandchildren, Carley Laird, Nicholas Laird, Madison Laird, Cassandra Laird, Skylar Laird, Rebecca Steinebach, and Megan Steinebach; nieces and nephews; and several very special friends.

Visitation will be held from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Monday, July 6, 2015, at Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home of Traverse City. Vern's memorial service, which will include military rites by VFW Cherryland Post 2780, will take place Tuesday, July 7, 2015, at 11 a.m., with visitation one hour prior to service at Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial donations be directed to Munson Hospice or the Salvation Army of Traverse City in memory of Vern. Please also share your thoughts and memories of Vern by way of his online guestbook at [www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com](http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com)

# Cemetery

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## Oakwood Cemetery

1325 East Eighth Street  
Traverse City, MI, 49686

# Events

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**JUL** **Visitation** 05:00PM - 07:00PM

**6**

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Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home  
305 Sixth St, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

**JUL** **Visitation** 10:00AM - 11:00AM

**7**

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Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home  
305 Sixth St, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

**JUL** **Funeral Service** 11:00AM

**7**

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Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home  
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