



Leander Theisen, 90, a long-time resident of Bozeman, died March 28, 2008, in the company of his family.

Lee was born March 1, 1918, on the family farm in La Moure, North Dakota, to Mathias and Eva (Lutgen) Theisen. At 16, he “hopped” a train to Cold Spring, Minnesota and worked as a farm hand, eventually meeting his future wife, Mary Kinzer, whom he married in Columbus, Montana in 1946. In the intervening years, Lee worked for the Civilian Conservation Corps and trained as carpenter. He served in the Pacific in WWII, a profound experience for which he was awarded the Bronze Star and a Purple Heart.

After residing for a short time in Columbus, Lee and Mary, who measured their riches in children, moved to Bozeman, where they raised their large clan. Lee joined the carpenters union in 1946 and worked in construction for several decades. He retired from the MSU service shop in 1982.

Lee was a man of his time who survived the Great Depression, WWII and the Information Age. He enjoyed working with his hands and kept his cards close. He was also ahead of his time, constructing a backyard solar shower in the 1970s and recycling wooden pallets to build furniture that now fills the houses of his children and grandchildren.

Lee enjoyed playing cards and the accordion, fishing at Georgetown Lake, doing the morning crossword puzzle and guessing the answers on Jeopardy and Wheel of Fortune.

He is survived by his children: Ginny and John Guzik, Jim Theisen, Kathy and Don Keil, Mary Fisher, Pat and John Healow, Pete and Camille Theisen, Joseph Theisen, John Theisen, Maureen Theisen, Margaret Theisen and Cathy Casalegno, Paul Theisen, Liz and Bryan Mackie, Anita and Bill Kearney; his grandchildren: Gina and Steven Guzik, Jennifer (Jay) Axelrod, Melinda and Jeanette Theisen, Peter and Alex Keil, Christine (Colm) Moore, Heather Fisher, Julia Machado, Angela and Lisa Healow, Spencer Miller, Julian Nolen, Sara and Hanna Mackie, Natasha and Jacob Kearney; his great-grandchildren: Keegan Anderson, Sierra Fisher-Dykman, Brayden Machado, and his three sisters, Millie, Aggie and Corrine.

He is preceded in death by his wife Mary of 51 years, his granddaughter Nicole Kearney and 6 of his 9 siblings.

God speed Lee. Your grandkids will miss seeing you in your lawn chair at their sporting events and we'll all miss your sense of humor, which you kept to the end.