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Peoria Journal Star, The (IL) - Thursday, February 1, 2007

## Michael Earnest

CHILLICOTHE - Michael R. "Big E" Earnest, 53, of Chillicothe, formerly of East Peoria, died Tuesday, Jan. 30, 2007, at his residence.

Born Sept. 13, 1953, in Peoria, Ill., to Raymond W. and Esther R. Bauer Earnest, he married Michelle Rynearson in 1993.

Mike was a dedicated and loving father to his daughter, Katie, and son, Brandon Earnest, both of Chillicothe.

He is also survived by a brother, Merlyn Earnest, and his sisters, Donna (Wayne) Simmons and Dorothy Thompson, all of East Peoria; sisters, Diane Earnest of Maryland Heights, Mo., and Debbie (Bob) Blackwell of Pottsboro, Texas; and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents and his parents.

Mike was an engine tester for Caterpillar Inc. at the Mossville plant, where he worked for more than 30 years and last worked Tuesday.

He loved to ride his Harley.

Mike was a member of United Auto Workers Local 974.

A funeral service will be at 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 3, 2007, at Deiters Funeral Home in East Peoria. Visitation will be from 5 to 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 2, 2007, at the funeral home. Burial will be in Chillicothe Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to an education fund for his children in care of CEFCU.

To send online condolences, please visit [www.deitersfuneralhome.com](http://www.deitersfuneralhome.com).

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Page: B4

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