



John DeWayne Wolf

April 24, 1923 - May 12, 2015

John DeWayne Wolf, 92, of Kearney, died Tuesday, May 12, 2015 at Good Samaritan Society - St. Luke's in Kearney. A "Celebration Of Life" service is scheduled at 11:00 a.m. Friday, May 15, 2015 at the First Lutheran Church with Pastor Eric Leshar officiating. Burial with military honors provided by the Nebraska National Guard will follow at Kearney Cemetery. Visitation is from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Thursday at O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home. The family suggests memorials in DeWayne's name to any of his favorite charities: First Lutheran Church, 3315 G Avenue, Kearney, NE 68847, Good Samaritan Society – St. Luke's, 2201 East 32nd, Kearney, NE 68847 or UNK "Wolf Family Scholarship Fund", P.O. Box 2678, Kearney, NE 68848. Online condolences may be shared at www.osrfh.com. O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

DeWayne was born April 24, 1923, in Kearney to John D. Wolf and Evelyn M. (Drake) Wolf. On December 18, 1948, he married Beverly J. Goldenstein in Smith Center, KS.

Wolf graduated from Kearney High School in 1940 and attended the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, NE. While in college, he was a member of Phi Gamma Delta fraternity. He played trombone in the UNL concert and marching bands and later became Drum Major. During the train trip to march in the 1941 Rose Bowl, DeWayne and six other band members wrote the

“Band Song” still performed by the Cornhusker Marching Band today.

He joined the U.S. Army in 1943, completed basic training at Fort Roberts, CA, then studied engineering at the University of California at Berkeley in preparation for the Manhattan Project. Known by his first name John while in the Army, he was assigned to the 11th Armored Division as a “computer” in the Fire Direction Center for an armored field artillery battalion. T/Sgt. Wolf fought in the Battle of the Bulge, helped liberate the Mauthausen concentration camp, and saw combat in Belgium, Germany, and Austria under the command of General George Patton. Upon discharge in 1945, Wolf attended the University of Michigan Law School, graduating in 1948.

He returned to Kearney and practiced law for 25 years until his appointment as District Judge for Buffalo and Sherman Counties from 1976 to 1990. Judge Wolf created the position of Child Custody Officer, the first real effort by a Nebraska court to mediate child custody and visitation issues in the best interests of the children. His “Marital Property Statement” made it easier for attorneys and judges to determine the assets and debts of divorcing couples, so the form was widely adopted by other district courts statewide. After his retirement, Judge Wolf was appointed as an Acting Justice on the Nebraska Supreme Court to hear several cases.

DeWayne was active in civic affairs, helping the city obtain Frontier Airlines as its first commercial airline service. He represented the Kearney Chamber of Commerce in successfully obtaining approval of Interstate 80’s route through Kearney.

Wolf helped obtain legislation creating the Central Nebraska Community College and served as the college’s Legal Counsel for ten years until his appointment to the bench. He served on the original board of Senior College of Central Nebraska and was Treasurer of the group for the first six years of its history.

An active Lutheran, DeWayne chaired the building committees for the

construction of both Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Kearney and the Campus Lutheran worship center at the University of Nebraska – Kearney. An avid reader, golfer, and Nebraska football fan, DeWayne enjoyed traveling with his wife and friends, and hosting family reunions.

DeWayne moved to Northridge retirement community in April 2012, then he joined wife Beverly at St. Luke's where he and his family celebrated his 92nd birthday on April 24th.

Survivors include wife Beverly; son Chuck Wolf and wife Melanie Miller of Sugar Land, TX; son John Wolf of Kearney; daughters-in-law Pam Wolf of Lincoln, NE, and Nancy Wolf of Monroe, WA.

Wolf's seven grandchildren include Angela Tullos and husband Jimmy of Flower Mound, TX; Amy Sayre and husband Herb of Frisco, TX; David Wolf and wife Christina of Frisco, TX; Sarah Collinge and husband Max of Bothell, WA; Bethany Robinson and husband Craig of Snohomish, WA; Andrew Wolf and fiancé Anna Claire Stearns of Lincoln, NE; and Becca Wolf of Lincoln, NE. He is also survived by eight great-grandchildren and his brother, Robert Wolf of Champaign, IL. DeWayne's parents and his youngest son, Stephen Wolf, preceded him in death.

Cemetery Details

Kearney Cemetery

4400 Avenue I
Kearney, NE 68847
(308) 233-3244

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 14. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Homes and Cremations
4115 Ave N
Kearney, NE 68847
(308) 234-3500
info@osrfh.com
<https://www.osrfh.com>

Celebration of Life

MAY 15. 11:00 AM (CT)

First Lutheran Church
3315 Ave G
Kearney, NE 68847

Tribute Wall



“ *John DeWayne Wolf*

January 28, 2023 at 08:01 AM



“ *Was a very likable gentleman. Very witty and some one you could acknowledge as a good friend. A family man at heart and one who loves his family and likewise in return. He was highly respected in his profession. I know that he was a very Godly Christian man and the Lord will gladly welcome him home. Our deepest regards, sympathy, prayers, to Beverly, Chuck, John, and family.*

Prayerfully,

Wanda and Rod Bruce

Rod Bruce - May 20, 2015 at 01:26 AM



“ *Beverly and family-*

You are in our thoughts and prayers. Judge Wolf was a wonderful husband, father, grandfather, leader and a pillar of the community. He was a mentor to so many families. He will be dearly missed but forever remembered by all who knew him.

Loving thoughts-

Mary Ellen Lantis and Family

Mary Ellen Lantis - May 15, 2015 at 06:03 PM

JZ

“ Chuck- though I didn't have the pleasure to meet your Dad in person, my life has been enriched by my personal and business association with you and Melanie over the past 25 years. I recall the gleam in your eyes whenever you spoke of your Father. Fairness, understanding, firmness in following the prescribed rules, and good-ole common sense are the virtues I've always admired about your admonitions to clients in media training; and those are values that you've obviously inherited from your Dad.

I'm a better person for having known and worked with you. My prayed thanks go to your Dad this evening for having raised you so well!

JimZ

Jim Zura - May 14, 2015 at 10:15 PM

BB

“ Bob G and Brenda purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of John DeWayne Wolf.



Bob G and Brenda - May 14, 2015 at 03:56 PM

KS

“ To this day Judge DeWayne Wolf is the best judge that I have ever had the pleasure of appearing before. Judge Wolf literally revolutionized the practice of family law.

Kent A. Schroeder

Kent A Schroeder - May 14, 2015 at 09:51 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of John DeWayne Wolf.*



May 13, 2015 at 10:56 PM



“ *Judge Wolf was quite a guy. Will always remember him as one of the "greats" of Kearney, NE.*

*Nancy McCammon-Hansen
Fort Wayne, IN.*

Nancy Hansen - May 13, 2015 at 02:29 PM



“ *We have fond memories of DeWayne. We lived as Beverly and DeWayne's neighbors for 12 years. He was very organized and kept good records of our condo. association. We will miss his kind words and pleasant smile. We were very pleased and honored that DeWayne called and wanted our son, John, recently appointed county judge to have his robe. Our son, John, will wear his robe with much pride!*

Earl and JoAnn Rademacher

Earl Rademacher - May 13, 2015 at 11:35 AM



*We send our sympathy to Beverly and family. Judge DeWayne Wolf was one of Kearney's finest men.
Jerry and Jean Hueser*

Jerry and Jean Hueser - May 14, 2015 at 10:06 PM



DeWayne was not only a fair and excellent judge he was a man I highly respected. The world would be a much better place if we had more men with the character of DeWayne Wolf, he will be missed.
Steve and Bari McCormick

Steve McCormick - May 17, 2015 at 07:56 PM