



Roger A. Vance

September 7, 1946 - April 14, 2024

A Nebraska farm boy was born September 7, 1946 to Glenn and Elaine Derr Vance. He was named Roger Allan in honor of Roger Leavitt, who saved Glenn's life three times on the USS Neville. The two Rogers, never met but they shared fearlessness, sharp awareness of surroundings and sense of duty to fellow travelers on their life journey.

Little Roger was told the battery for his toy was out of juice. Explosion, sugar water boiling on the stove and battery parts on the ceiling. He was making more juice,,he explained. His first grade teacher said," I can't teach you because you are left handed" and moved grades with Roger the next four years. In sixth grade he had a new teacher, Mr. Vance. Roger called him Uncle Maynard and became a lifelong learner with insatiable curiosity.

Roger asked high school classmate, Charlene Call, to work on an English assignment with him. Her youngest brother sang "Peanut setting on the railroad track . . ."without end, while they attempted to study. Afterwards, Gene broke into "toot, toot, peanut butter" every time he saw Roger, who was unperturbed. Roger also ran track in high school and still holds the class D record in the 880 Relay along with cousin Ron and two classmates.

In high school, he also met the true love of his life --- engines. He bought a 1947 Cushman scooter at age fourteen and attended the National Cushman

meet held in Hastings, NE in 2023 with the same scooter. He bought a second set of wheels at age 15 for \$65, a 1929 Model A owned by his great uncle. It sits in his garage, the way it looked when he bought it. Except for the back seat his Mom upholstered so Roger could take his sisters to school. He always enjoyed showing off his Model A and also owns a Model T.

Roger enrolled in Nebraska Vocational Technical School at Milford. Diesel engines became his focus for the rest of his life. He could tell you how any engine worked, the laws of physics behind the working, where it was manufactured and more. Enlisting in the US Army following graduation, Roger was with the 88 HEM in Hanau, Germany servicing diesel components. During NATO exercises in 1968 he was on Temporary Duty repairing diesel engines on the road. In 1969, he married Charlene Call following a Nebraska March snowstorm. They moved to Hanau, the first of five unknown cities that became home. When they left a year later, they had visited six different European countries and were travel and history buffs.

Roger began his career in urban transit maintenance as a diesel mechanic for Lincoln City Lines. which became Lincoln Transit System (now Star Tran). He was union steward for the American Transit Union, negotiating with the city to supply tools and equipment for mechanics. He began working in administrative roles soon after. He recognized the value of computerized maintenance records for large fleets and was an early advocate and adopter.

Two sons were born in Lincoln. Roger loved being a dad. Together they disassembled and reassembled every moving thing in the house, except the cat and the cook. The family visited engine related places on vacation such as Ford Museum in Dearborn, MI, and a train trip to Cheyenne, Wyoming where Roger's aunt worked signals for Union Pacific. In 1984 the family moved to Littleton, Colorado where Roger was Supervisor for Denver RTD and then Colorado Charter. And panned gold with his sons, in the mountains, on

weekends.

Roger was offered a position as Director of Heavy Equipment Maintenance at Central Ohio Transit Authority in Columbus, Ohio. He didn't believe the 5:30 am caller. Later, he verified a two hour time difference between states and called to accept responsibility for maintaining an 800 bus fleet. The family moved to Worthington, Ohio. In 2000, he earned the COTA Excellence award. Roger retired after twenty-eight years in 2013.

Roger and Charlene visited 40 states and treasured travel with Roger's sisters. Roger immersed himself in history, researching his father's experience in World War II. Roger and sisters became the Fourth Generation to own the David Hite farm land near Bladen, in Webster County. In 2015, Roger and Charlene returned to blue skies, wide open spaces and family, settling in Kearney, Nebraska. One son, Justin Glenn, moved with them.

Roger was diagnosed with Primary Progressive Aphasia, due to Frontal Temporal Degeneration in 2019, although he had it earlier. Roger became wheelchair dependent and silent. But his mind remained active and he understood what was said. Therapists helped him move, taught him to use an eye gaze device for communication, to swallow overcoming weakness caused by the inability to speak, to adapt to his changing world. Aides helped him prepare for the day. Justin lifted, drove, and did countless chores, Charlene, coordinated the care team, while researching, working with others to determine what would be most beneficial for Roger. He was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma in 2023, another disease that usually occurs in younger people. You Tube provided the thrum of engines that defined all of his life – trains, tractors, race cars, antique farm engines and more. He awoke every morning with a smile.

While stationed at Ft. Belvoir, VA, Roger tried to propose to Charlene in Washington, D.C. where he loved the history and architecture. It was not to be, At a fountain, kids wading clamored for a “quarter, mister”. A stranger staggered toward an historic bench, Roger jumped up, the man changed course –“all right you can have her”. Finally, they caught the last bus to base and disembarked at Service Club #3. Roger knelt and said “Will you be my wife and partner? “ It was so. The sentry guarding motor pool, shouted the time out of the darkness, adding “All is well.” And so it was.

Roger was predeceased by parents, Glenn and Elaine Derr Vance, sister Vanetta Jean Vance Larrick and brother-in-laws Phillip Hartman, James Larrick and James Johnson and nephew David Larrick. He is survived by wife of 55 astonishing years , Charlene Call Vance, sons Justin Glenn of Kearney; Russell Allen, wife Ann, granddaughters, –the pure joy of Roger’s life - Elena Marie Vance and Natalie Elizabeth Vance of Worthington, Ohio. Two sisters, Janice Hartman of Guide Rock, NE and LeAnn Johnson of Lincoln,NE also survive. Other survivors include the Fifth Generation owners of Vance Family Farm: nephews and families; Daniel Larrick and John Hartman, nieces and families; Diana Larrick Benson, Heather Hartman Bernhardt, Kari Larrick. He will be missed by Charlene’s siblings and spouses with whom he fit so well: Jerry and June Call of Grant’s Pass, Oregon, Karol and Grey Pickerill of Glenvill, NE, Gene (Toot, toot peanut butter) and Deb Call of Wendell, N.C., Virginia and James Conway of Geneva, NE and Mary Beth and Peter Ludowese of Kearney, NE. Roger is survived by many other nieces and nephews, whom he teased and offered Cushman and Model A rides. A shout out to nieces Gina Pickerill Bowden and family who made the back deck safer one Thanksgiving just after diagnosis, Steven and Stephanie Boettger and Nate the Great, Angie Call and daughters Lee and Alannah, who made life post diagnosis more joyful with holiday visits and to long-time friend Roger Young of Pierce, NE. He is also survived by many other relatives and friends.

A special thank you to all the many medical professionals who took the extra time to better Roger's life in spite of the lack of information about his disease. Roger and Charlene hope that others will benefit from their experience, and learning curves so the PPA/FTD diagnosis will no longer be seen as a death sentence with "no known cause, no known cure, no known treatment." Please consider a donation in Roger's memory to AFTD.org/Comstock Grant.

Cemetery Details

Kearney Cemetery

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

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 17. 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>

Funeral Service

APR 18. 2:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church
4500 Linden Drive
Kearney, NE 68847

Tribute Wall

VB

“ Veryl & Jan Berry purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Roger A. Vance.



Veryl & Jan Berry - April 17, 2024 at 05:29 PM

DK

“ Diana, Jarrod, and the kids planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Roger A. Vance.

Diana, Jarrod, and the kids - April 17, 2024 at 05:02 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Roger A. Vance.



April 17, 2024 at 05:02 PM

AN

“ Alicia and Renee,
I am sorry for the loss of your uncle. Sending you and love and condolences.

Anonymous - April 17, 2024 at 10:49 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Roger A. Vance.*



April 16, 2024 at 05:52 PM



“ *Connie Tessa Welty lit a candle in memory of Roger Vance*



Connie & Tessa Welty - April 16, 2024 at 05:02 PM



“ *Charlene, Russell, Justin, LeAnn and Janice, Sorry to hear about Roger. My prayers are with you during this difficult time. May God wrap his comforting arms about you all and give you peace. Patti Derr Keithley, Topeka, KS*

Patti Derr Keithley - April 16, 2024 at 10:29 AM