



Russell B. Florell

September 15, 1922 - April 22, 2013

KEARNEY - Russell B. "Rusty" Florell, 90, of Kearney, formerly of Elm Creek, died Monday, April 22, 2013, at Mother Hull Home.

Services will be at 11 a.m. Friday at Kearney Evangelical Free Church with the Revs. Mike Shields and Todd Marcy officiating. Burial will be at Kearney Cemetery with military honors by the Nebraska National Guard Honors Team, American Legion Post 52 and Veterans of Foreign Wars Pot 759 of Kearney. O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

He was born Sept. 15, 1922, in Holdrege to Oscar and Hazel (Bragg) Florell. On Aug. 31, 1942, he married Arlene Reiter.

Survivors include his wife; sons, Eugene and his wife, Barbara, Arlin and his wife, Sally, and Kelly and his wife, Robin, all of Elm Creek; daughter, Shelly Miller and her husband, Larry, of Kearney; 19 grandchildren; 38 great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren; and sister, Audrey Reiter of Holdrege.

He was one of three children in his family. He attended the Snow Ball Country School in Phelps County where he received an honor for 32 months of perfect attendance. He completed the ninth grade and then quit school to work on building a swimming pool in Holdrege to earn money and to help at home.

His many jobs in his career included working in beet fields, watermelon fields, at the Elm Creek alfalfa mill and for Union Pacific Railroad on the extra gang. He also worked in the coal mines in Rock Springs, Wyo., with his three brothers-in-law.

Rusty met the love of his life, Arlene Reiter, and they were soon married at Trinity Evangelical Free Church in Holdrege. Uncle Sam then interrupted that blissful union and drafted him into the U.S. Army Air Corps. He was sent to India where he flew "The Hump" (China, India, Burma) as a fuel tender during World War II.

He received an honorable discharge from the Army in 1946 and remained a faithful supporter to the VFW and American Legion. He and Arlene were honored to be a part of the Hero Flight, which honored WWII veterans. He had a strong belief in freedom and was very proud when his three grandsons volunteered for the Army and served in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

After completing his service, the couple made their home at Wilcox where they farmed and raised livestock. In 1953, they purchased a country filling station, which later became known as Rusty's Platte Service. Those were hardworking, long days filled with many great memories.

Rusty and Arlene, along with their kids, were a great team, Arlene ran the gas station and pumped gas, changed tires and made hamburgers, while Rusty had a tank wagon service and service shop, shelled corn and did whatever else it took to pay the bills. Later, he expanded into the fertilizer business, which is now known as Rusty's Fertilizer. He retired in 1990 and enjoyed many years of traveling in their RV and wintering in Arizona.

He was an active member of Holcomb Evangelical Free Church near

Holdrege where he was confirmed, baptized and served many years. One of the highlights of his life was taking his family to the Billy Graham Crusade in Omaha where he rededicated his life to Jesus Christ. There were lots of singing and joy on the way home that day. He was saved.

Rusty was best known as an entrepreneur, an ambitious visionary and enjoyed a good challenge. He enjoyed life to the fullest with cars being one of his great passions in life. He also enjoyed golfing, stock car and drag racing, and bowling.

He leaves a beautiful legacy of love and commitment to his partner and beloved wife of 70 years, Arlene. Russell's love for the Lord was evident by his faithful and unconditional love for his family.

He was preceded in death by his parents and a brother, Edward. Memorials are suggested to the family for designation.

Tribute Wall



“ *Russell B. Florell*

January 28, 2023 at 08:01 AM



“ *Janet Strong lit a candle in memory of Russell B. Florell*



janet strong - April 09, 2015 at 11:15 PM



“ *Our heart felt LOVE is with you.*

Dorothy Bourbon, Wayne and Judy Strozzi - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM



“ *Geri and I are sad to hear of Uncle Russell's passing. All our thoughts and prayers are with you and we send our condolences to Aunt Arlene and her entire family. I'll always remember the 1962 Seattle Worlds Fair when they all came to visit us (I was 8). We visited with them in Phoenix when they came with the RV in the early 90's. That Nebraska Pride is something I will always remember! God Bless!*

Steve & Geri Watt - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM

MF

“ Aunt Arlene, Gene, Arlin, Shelly and Kelly, We are deeply saddened by the loss of our beloved Uncle Rusty. Our hearts are heavy with sadness but filled with beautiful memories of the great times we had when we were together. We will look forward to being with him in heaven one day. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. May God Bless you and give you comfort.

Marilyn McDonald and Family - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM

LS

“ Sorry to hear about Rusty's passing. I always enjoyed waiting on him at the clinic. Please know you are in my prayers!

LaRae Swenson - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM

GR

“ We are heartbroken by our loss. Rusty is one of my great mentors along with the whole family. I will always remember him and treasure our wonderful times in my heart. A True Hero for all of us!

Gary & Pamela Reiter - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM

DR

“ On behalf of the Reiter family in Wyoming, I would like to extend our deepest sympathy to Aunt Arlene, Aunt Audry and Cousin's, Gene Arlin, Kelly and Shelly and all your families over the loss of a veteran and great man - Uncle Rusty - May he rest in Peace. Ken Reiter (brother-in-law) Dick Reiter (nephew) Gary Reiter (nephew) Marilyn (Reiter) McDonald - niece

Dick Reiter - August 21, 2013 at 05:58 AM