



## Willard "Gayle" Woodruff

September 6, 1926 - March 30, 2023

Willard "Gayle" Woodruff, 96, of Kearney passed away Thursday, March 30, 2023 at his home with his family by his side, Funeral Services will be 9:30 a.m. Saturday, April 8, 2023 at the First Presbyterian Church in Kearney with the Rev. Clint Cozier officiating. Interment will follow at Kearney Cemetery with Military Honors provided by the Kearney American Legion Post #52 and VFW Post #759 in conjunction with the Nebraska National Guard Funeral Honors Team. Visitation will be 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Friday, April 7, 2023 at the O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home in Kearney.

Memorials are suggested to the Gayle and Wilma Memorial Scholarship Fund at Southern Valley High School or the Scholarship fund at First Presbyterian Church of Kearney. Condolences may be shared online at [www.osrfh.com](http://www.osrfh.com). O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Gayle was born September 6, 1926 in Alma, Nebraska to Charles and Dorothy (Woodruff) Petijean. His mother passed away when Gayle was an infant and he was raised by Beulah and Roland Woodruff, his maternal uncle. He grew up in rural Oxford, NE and received his education through 10th grade from country school in Hollinger then graduated from Oxford High School in 1944.

Gayle proudly served in the United States Army from February 13, 1945 until his honorable discharge on December 11, 1946. During that time, he served

on Leyte Island in the Philippines training for the invasion of Japan. On November 2, 1947, Gayle was united in marriage to Wilma Wright at the Stamford Presbyterian Church. Gayle farmed his whole life as well as being a crop adjuster for many years.

He enjoyed gardening with Wilma and had a passion for all animals. Gayle was humble and kind and was always willing to lend a helping hand. Gayle's family was the most important thing in the world to him. He was a longtime member of Kearney First Presbyterian Church, Kearney American Legion and Kearney VFW.

Survivors include his children Tom (Diane) Woodruff of Denver, Jerry (Peggy) Woodruff of North Platte, Kathy (Don) Ulrich of Kearney, Dennis Woodruff of Holdrege, Denise (Jay) Bird of Ocklawaha, FL and Lissa Woodruff and husband Evan Kinney of Kearney; grandchildren Phillip, Jeffrey and Melanie Woodruff; Laura, Michael and Beth Woodruff, Scott Ewing, Christy McKeeman; Jenifer Hovland, Melissa and Brandon Ulrich, Brett Jorgensen and Ethan Kinney; great grandchildren, Taylor, Ryan, Mariah, Connor and Christopher McKeeman, Breyden Geyer, Brenner Ewing, Ulrike Dossdall and Jocelyn Ulrich, Gabriel Jorgensen and Hudson Woodruff; great great grandchildren, Melody and Silas Dossdall; sister, Cheryl (Ruben) Ahrens of Arizona; as well as, numerous nieces, nephews, extended family and friends.

Gayle was preceded in death by his wife, Wilma Woodruff; parents; sister, Dorothy Gehrig; and brothers, Keith Petijean and Charles Petijean.

# Cemetery Details

## Kearney Cemetery

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

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR 7. 4:00 PM - 6:00 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 8. 9:30 AM (CT)

First Presbyterian Church  
4511 6th Ave.  
Kearney, NE 68845

# Tribute Wall



“ Dear family,

*What a kind, compassionate, and thoughtful man Uncle Gayle was! Since we lost our dad (your Uncle Chuck) recently, I understand what you're going through.*

*I pray that fond memories of good times spent together, and knowing that one day you will be reunited in Heaven will help bring peace and comfort to you during this sad time.*

*You're in my thoughts and prayers!*

*- Brenda (Petitjean) Benhower*

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**Pj Benhower** - April 07, 2023 at 09:28 AM

DD

“ Deanna Dukes purchased the Simply Elegant Sp  
athiphyllum for the family of Willard "Gayle"  
Woodruff.



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**Deanna Dukes** - April 07, 2023 at 06:33 AM

MD

“ Matthew and Sarah Dosedall purchased the Seren  
e Retreat for the family of Willard "Gayle"  
Woodruff.



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**Matthew and Sarah Dosedall** - April 06, 2023 at 10:53 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Willard "Gayle" Woodruff.*



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April 05, 2023 at 10:23 PM



“ *Our heartfelt condolences to Gayle's family. Gayle and Wilma were special friends and neighbors in the Stamford community. In their memory, we are sending a contribution to the Southern Valley Scholarship Fund they established.*  
*Dave and Vicky (Pyell) Henry*

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**Vicky Henry** - April 05, 2023 at 01:21 PM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Willard "Gayle" Woodruff.*



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April 03, 2023 at 11:27 AM