



Gerald O. "Jerry" Brandorff

February 11, 1934 - June 23, 2024

Gerald O. "Jerry" Brandorff, age 90, of Kearney, passed away Sunday, June 23, 2024 at Kearney Regional Medical Center. Funeral services will be 10:30 a.m., Friday, June 28, 2024 at the First United Methodist Church in Kearney. Burial will follow the service at the Kearney Cemetery with military honors graveside by the U.S. Navy Funeral Honors Team, Kearney VFW Post #759 and Kearney American Legion Post #52. Visitation will be Thursday, June 27th from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Horner Lieske McBride & Kuhl Funeral Home. In lieu of flowers please consider a contribution to the First United Methodist Church or the Kearney Community Foundation. The service will be livestreamed at www.kearneyfirstumc.org

Deep faith, supported by mighty strength and delivered to others with tender love is the sum of Jerry's life. His love for people, especially his family, was unwavering and committed.

He met his dream girl at a Kearney gas station in 1952. They were married for 71 years, and she never pumped her own gas again. The affection in his gaze toward her only grew as the years passed. He was a gentle, loyal, kind husband who crafted his words to her with great care, which built her up and made sure she knew she was loved. His desire was to give Genny the desires of her heart. She would often mention she wanted something, and it would not be long before he was making it happen. They had three kids, raising them

with boundaries and love. They lived life to the fullest, traveling around the world, enjoying family ski trips, numerous road trips and lots of time with friends and family at home. Jerry loved helping Genny take care of the home they lived in, and there is no doubt his lawn was his pride and joy. He would often be seen riding his lawnmower, shirt off, hat on, just a farmer at heart. As his family grew and the grandkids came, he would sit them on his lap and let them drive or put them in the John Deere garden trailer and pull them along for the ride. It was a favorite pastime of all the grandkids. He was a man of many hobbies, and one was a love of birds. He had several bird feeders hanging outside the sunroom windows and a heated birdbath in the back yard, so it didn't freeze over in the winters. Rain, snow or shine, those birds were well fed. Undoubtedly, one of his favorite past times with his bride was to go for car rides...he loved a good ride. Their love for one another and commitment to each other is the foundation they chose to build their family on.

Raised on a small family farm by his parents, George and Ada Brandorff, along with his five siblings, he learned the value of hard work which gifted him with the ability to endure hard things. When his draft number was coming up, he chose to sign up for the Navy for four years. He was deployed to Japan for two years, where he served as squad leader in the Military Police as well as a shipping clerk, during the Korean War. While he was serving abroad, Genny gave birth to their first child, which Jerry did not see for 18 months. When he was scheduled for a military flight home to meet his daughter for the first time, he was bumped off the flight by an officer who took his seat. That plane subsequently crashed, sadly killing all on board and Jerry's life was spared. Years later, his life was spared twice more while working as a Rainbow bread man. He would wake up long before dawn to load his bread truck to run his route through small rural towns and on back country roads. One afternoon on his way home he fell asleep at the wheel, awakened as his truck rumbled off the side of the road. When he came to a stop and looked behind him, he saw a road grader had pulled over and the driver was shaking due to the near

head-on collision. On the road again, months later, another incident took place that nearly cost him his life. He left for his route early in the morning with a light jacket, emblazoned with the bread company logo, only to get stuck in a blizzard by afternoon. His truck didn't have heat, so he had no other choice but to get out and walk. Spotting lights in the distance, and nearly freezing to death, he crossed the field toward the lights. He came to a family farmstead; they took him in for the night and then helped him dig his truck out the next day. Many years later he would repay that good deed several times over by taking his snowmobile out in bad blizzards to help people who were stranded. Abraham Lincoln said, "it's not the years in your life that count, it's the life in your years." God gifted him with both.

Jerry had a deep conviction of right and wrong. From the bread company, he went on to work at Rockwell Mfg. for ten years. While working there he almost lost his leg when it was nearly severed due to safety guards the company refused to put on the machines. He had to work several jobs at the time because the company did not pay enough to support a family. He helped organize an attempt to form a union to ask for more pay and better working conditions. The effort got blocked, so he led the workers on strike, which ultimately failed. Nevertheless, he stood for what he believed no matter the cost. He was steadfast in his beliefs although it could come across as stubborn. The paradox was, he was also very open minded with an exceptionally high level of emotional intelligence. He was naturally empathic, so reading people came easily to him. While seemingly set in his ways, upon observation you would find he was curiously listening, with a willingness to grow and change his mind. This empathy for people was the foundation for his success in his final career. After leaving Rockell, he started selling insurance as an agent for MFA, later Shelter Insurance. Being paid only commissions while trying to support a family was a leap of faith. It paid off, as he was an agent for forty-four years. In those four decades, he won numerous awards,

including “Agent of the Year” for the company just eight years after he went full time. He served on the board of directors for many organizations, including the First United Methodist Church, the Good Samaritan Hospital Foundation, and the local Girl Scouts chapter to name a few. But more importantly he impacted the lives of individuals and families that sat across from his desk in their best of times and worst of times.

His accolades and accomplishments are too long to list. However, he was so much more than what he did. He was benevolent--he served and honored so many people in need. He was loyal, patient, kind, giving, fun - hilarious actually - he squeezed out every inch life had to offer. Jerry and Genny have a unique group of friends they coined “The Gang” who have been friends for over 50 years. They raised kids, threw holiday parties, played cards, laughed, loved, and cried alongside one another through all the seasons of their lives. Jerry was as ornery as he was loving and loyal. They played many pranks on each other and there are many stories to tell!

It's hard to fit such a large, full life on a small page of words but if you were to sit with him and ask him what he wanted to be remembered by, he would have said he wanted to be remembered by how much he loved his family. He never left a conversation or a visit without saying “I love you”. His hugs smelled of his cologne and his ice blue eyes would communicate a depth of love words never could. He had a unique way to convince everyone they were his favorite, all the while being completely fair in how he treated them. He was clear in his conviction that he would never stop loving you no matter what you did or said. His love was constant and steady, like a river, carving canyons in your heart and filling them with a tangible confidence that he was someone who loved you no matter what. The beauty of it all, his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, all reflect different facets of who he was, and though he is no longer here, he lives on through each of us. That is a legacy worth celebrating.

Jerry is survived by his wife Genny of Kearney; son Perry and Lorie Brandorff of Chicago, IL; daughters, Pamela and Joseph Methe of Kearney, Jerilyn Ruff of Denver, CO; grandchildren, Joshua and Kara Methe, Kylee and George Washington, Nicholas and Maria Methe, Anthony and Laura Methe, Jordan and Lisa Methe, Michael Brandorff, Emily Brandorff, Matthew and fiancée Visha Meyer, Jacob and fiancée Anna Mischio, Natasha and Dehrel Seahorn, Nathaniel and Brianne Ruff, Alexander Ruff, Zachary Ruff, Kyle Ruff; 19 great grandchildren; and sister, Shirley and Gene Luther of Albany, Oregon, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Jerry was preceded in death by parents George and Ada Brandorff, his son-in-law, Robert Ruff, brothers George, and LeRoy; sisters Betty Brown and Erma Jean Margritz.

Cemetery Details

Kearney Cemetery

4400 Avenue I
Kearney, NE 68847

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 27. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Horner Lieske McBride & Kuhl
2421 Avenue A
Kearney, NE 68847
(308) 237-2259
<https://www.hlmkfuneral.com>

Funeral Service

JUN 28. 10:30 AM (CT)

First United Methodist Church
4500 Linden Drive
Kearney, NE 68847

Tribute Wall

MF

“ Jerry was such a kind man and wonderful neighbor. I'm sorry to the family for your loss. Mitch Farritor

Mitch Farritor - June 27, 2024 at 08:48 AM

KR

“ I will always remember the folder of jokes that he brought to Oregon when he came to list. That was the first time my husband Steve met Uncle Jerry and they shared the jokes. Kristy Nofziger

Kristy - June 26, 2024 at 03:52 PM

TO

“ My first Kearney car insurance man. Excellent neighbor who had a beautiful home property. Jerry knew how to skillfully operate his John Deere rider mower. May his memory be eternal

Tim O'Dea - June 25, 2024 at 02:06 PM

JW

“ We send our sympathy to you and your family! Jerry was a kind ,caring man he always spoke in such a pleasant manner.



John & Lee Ward - June 25, 2024 at 10:15 AM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Gerald O. "Jerry" Brandorff.*



June 25, 2024 at 09:28 AM



“ *Sorry to read about your loss. Thinking of you all Arvid and Althea Wiest*

A Wiest - June 25, 2024 at 08:10 AM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gerald O. "Jerry" Brandorff.*



June 24, 2024 at 09:52 PM