



Kenneth Wayne Wheat

May 7, 1936 - January 24, 2023

Kenneth Wayne Wheat (86) left this world to meet his Lord on January 24th, 2023, after years of declining health.

Kenneth (“Kenny”) was born on May 7, 1936, to Kenneth B. and Mabel (Hall) Wheat, and lived in the Carthage area his entire life. He graduated from Carthage Senior High in 1955 and attended Ozark Bible College. On November 12, 1955, he married his sweetheart Elaine Spry and to this union, three children were born.

Kenneth worked hard all his life. He was employed by Flex-O-Lators, Beck Casket Co., MFA Feed, then drove a propane truck for Smallwood Gas Co. until illness forced his retirement. It was important to him that Elaine could be a stay-at-home mother. While working full-time, he also did odd jobs to help make ends meet. He plowed gardens, mowed lawns, painted cars, hauled hay, cut firewood, and did handyman repairs, while Elaine made the girls’ clothes, canned food from the garden, made jelly, and baked something for him every day. Always a farmer at heart, he helped his kids raise all kinds of animals in the backyard, with sheep being some of their favorite pets.

In 1999 he was stricken by a rare disease that left him completely paralyzed. He nearly died but fought back to walk again. Even though he had increasing mobility issues and was losing his sight, he kept up his lawn and home projects and took care of Elaine while she was a dialysis patient for 11 years. In 2016 he again fought back to survive a massive stroke but had to go into nursing care. He loved helping people, and his greatest lament after the

stroke was that he “couldn’t do anything for anybody.” He was well known for his sense of humor and loved to joke and tease, even in his last days. He accepted Christ as a youngster and loved to reminisce about growing up at the Avilla Church of Christ. Gospel music brought him great comfort and his faith in Jesus was the bedrock of his life, which helped him endure many trials. He was a long-time member of the Mr. & Mrs. Sunday School Class at 1st Christian Church in Carthage.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother Walter (W.A.) Wheat. Kenneth and Elaine celebrated 61 years of marriage before she passed in 2017. Surviving are their children Kathy Bowers (Darrell), Keith Wheat (Lisa), and Karen Wheat (who was also his devoted caregiver), 5 grandchildren, and several great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his sister Naydene Cunningham (Ivan), many nieces, nephews, extended family, and friends.

Visitation will be at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 28th, followed by the memorial service at 10:00 a.m. Both will be held at Ulmer Funeral Home in Carthage, Missouri.

Memorial contributions may be made to the “Hospital Equipment Fund” at The Bridge (formerly 1st Christian Church) in Carthage or to Ozark Christian College in Joplin, Missouri.

The family would like to acknowledge the extraordinary care given by daughter Karen who spent countless hours by his side, as well as the staff of St. Luke’s Nursing Center for their kindness these last 6 years.

Cemetery Details

Avilla Cemetery

Avilla, MO

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 28. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

Ulmer Funeral Home
1208 S. Garrison
Carthage, MO 64836
(417) 358-2222
ulmerfh@gmail.com
<https://www.ulmerfh.com/>

Funeral Service

JAN 28. 10:00 AM (CT)

Ulmer Funeral Home
1208 S. Garrison
Carthage, MO 64836
(417) 358-2222
ulmerfh@gmail.com
<https://www.ulmerfh.com/>

Tribute Wall

DC

“ I’m so sorry to hear about Kenneth Wayne!
Sending thoughts and prayers from Waco,
Texas to your family!

With deepest sympathy, Deborah (Campbell)
Collins



Deborah Collins - January 31, 2023 at 12:17 AM

RM

“ I remember when he was driving for Smallwood. We ran out of propane on Christmas morning. He gave up time with his family to make sure we were still able to have our Christmas dinner! Karen was my locker partner in high school, and even though we haven’t remained as close as I would have liked, I still remember going and spending the night at her house with her mom’s cooking and her dad’s joking. My thoughts and prayers are with all of you!

Robyn (Willoughby) McWilliams - January 26, 2023 at 08:33 PM

AH

“ Ann H. purchased a sympathy card for the family of Kenneth Wayne Wheat.



Ann H. - January 26, 2023 at 01:14 PM