



Gaylord Burdette Williams

August 1, 1939 - March 14, 2026

Gaylord B. Williams was born in Polk, Nebraska on August 1st, 1939... at least that's how the birth certificate reads. Gaylord spent the first 65 years of his life thinking his birthday was August 2nd. No one knew anything was wrong until he finally received his official birth certificate, which read August 1st. Apparently, the country doctor who home delivered him mixed up the paperwork. What we do know for sure is that his mom, Sara Willits Williams, and his dad, Bill Williams, were excited upon Gaylord's arrival.

After his younger brother Jim was born, Sara and Bill packed up Beryl, Gaylord, and baby Jim and moved to a small farm outside of Stromsburg, Nebraska. Bill raised cattle and crops, and soon Judy and Billy joined the crew. The house and farm were soon full of kids, chores, and plenty of activity.

Gaylord started country school outside of Stromsburg when he was just 4 years old. He loved playing with his cousins, and, like most kids, his favorite subject was recess. He later attended Stromsburg High School where he enjoyed football, rabbit hunting, and chasing girls—though not necessarily in that order. He liked to tell the story of loading rifles with his cousin Duane in the pickup truck and sneaking in a little rabbit hunting before school started. Simpler times.

Gaylord graduated in 1956 at the age of 16 and tried a variety of jobs around

the area. But one thing he was very sure about was Karen Kay Heldt. After spotting Karen racing around with her brothers, he liked what he saw—and decided she was worth keeping up with.

Gaylord and Karen were married in 1959. Their family grew with the arrival of Terri in 1960, Traci in 1961, Jackie in 1962, Stacy in 1965, and finally their son Steve in 1974. Though Traci was only with them for a short time, she was always part of the family's story.

In 1965 Gaylord started his own business, Williams Excavating. Two years later the family moved to Millard, Nebraska. Life was busy running the business and raising their family, but in 1987 Gaylord realized a lifelong dream and moved back to the country, settling on a farm in Waterloo, Nebraska. Gaylord and Karen loved farm life. They kept busy gardening, raising donkeys, some cows, and a pony named Rusty. They even tried their hand at raising quail and pheasant, and he enjoyed woodworking too. But one of his favorite things was pattering around the place on his old John Deere B or his old Ford tractor. Mowing, cutting firewood, and working on whatever project needed attention that day. Every morning included an important stop—coffee at Cubby's around the corner, where there was always plenty of jokes, storytelling, and solving the world's problems—at least until the coffee ran out. Then it was time to refill and solve them again. And as many of you know, Gaylord's all-time favorite activity was cards—especially Pitch. He played cards with Karen nearly every day since 1959, with family whenever he could, and with just about any stranger willing to sit down and play a hand. More than anything, Gaylord loved his family—his children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. They were the center of his life. His quick humor, warm smile, and loving heart brought laughter and comfort to everyone around him. He always said: "love you," but it sounded more like "loze you." And that was just fine with us—because you always knew he meant it.

We would love for you all to stay and celebrate his life by sharing memories and retelling some of Gaylord's funny one-liners. That's exactly how he would want to be remembered.

As we leave today, we are comforted by scripture: "For by grace you have been saved through faith... it is the gift of God." — Ephesians 2:8

And we are reminded of the message of Amazing Grace — that grace has brought us safe thus far, and grace will lead us home.

Gaylord B. Williams passed away March 14, 2026 in at Miles Memory Care in Papillion, NE. He was preceded in death by daughter Traci Lee Williams, brothers Beryl and Billy Williams and sister Judy Allington. Survived by wife Karen, children: Terri Cantrell of Edmond, OK, Jackie (Mike) Friend of Bennington, NE, Stacy (Jeff) Neuhaus of Gretna, NE and Steven Williams of McKinney, TX, 8 grandchildren, 8 great grandchildren, brother Jim (Barnita) Williams, many nieces and nephews.

Funeral service 11 AM Friday, March 20 at Reichmuth Funeral Home, Yutan with visitation one hour prior to the service. Interment at Hollst Lawn Cemetery, Yutan. Memorials to the Alzheimer's Association.

Cemetery Details

Hollst Lawn Cemetery

630 County Road L
Yutan, NE 68073

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 20. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Reichmuth Funeral Homes - Yutan
409 4th St.
Yutan, NE 68073
(402) 625-2222
services@reichmuthfuneralhomes.com
<https://www.reichmuthfuneralhomes.com/>

Funeral Service

MAR 20. 11:00 AM (CT)

Reichmuth Funeral Homes - Yutan
409 4th St.
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Tribute Wall

EE

“ Gaylord dug my foundations back in the late seventies and eighties. Always did a top notch job and very quickly- I once questioned his prices and tried another company. Big mistake, I never used another digger again.
He had this “dry” sense of humor Which I always appreciated.
RIP Gaylord and condolences to his family and loved ones
Elliott Evans

Elliott Evans - March 19 at 10:30 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Gaylord Burdette Williams.



March 18 at 11:48 AM



“ Serene Reflections Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gaylord Burdette Williams.



March 18 at 09:57 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gaylord Burdette Williams.

March 18 at 09:57 AM

MS

“ Mike and Sibs purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Gaylord Burdette Williams.



Mike and Sibs - March 17 at 11:00 PM

MS

“ Mike and Sibs planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gaylord Burdette Williams.

Mike and Sibs - March 17 at 11:00 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Gaylord Burdette Williams.



March 17 at 03:19 PM