



## Gene Marvin Kruger

April 6, 1924 - October 20, 2019

Memorials to Elkhorn Public School Foundation;

Gene Marvin Kruger was born in April 6, 1924 in Fontanelle, Nebraska. He grew up in Arlington, Nebraska and graduated from Arlington High School in 1941. Growing up he was very active in athletics including basketball, track and baseball. Gene developed his love of fishing as a young boy. After high school, Gene attended Midland College in Fremont, Nebraska, earning his B.S. degree in 1946. While at Midland, Gene joined the United States Marine Corps. He rose to the rank of 2nd Lieutenant before being discharged as World War II ended.

While he was in the Marine Corps, Gene was granted a furlough to marry his high school sweetheart, Ruth Elaine Wilkins on December 30, 1943. Gene and Ruth raised five sons: Jim, John, Jerry, Joe and Dave. They made their home in Fremont and Arlington before settling in Elkhorn in 1949. Gene always enjoyed fishing, whether in Nebraska, Minnesota or Montana. He was a founder and proud member of the Alcoholics Anonymous program in Elkhorn in 1981. As the years added up, Gene remained active with his friends, playing cards, cribbage and he was always up for “watching the game”. He developed a keen taste for root beer floats. So much so that the

sweet treat was added to the menu at his assisted living facility.

Gene's true passion was teaching and coaching. He started his career in 1946 in Arlington. In 1949 he and his family moved to Elkhorn where he assumed head coaching responsibilities. Gene and Ruth left their teaching careers in 1968 and founded Big Red Scorebooks. First run out of their home, the business quickly outgrew their basement. The scorebooks business was then moved to the current downtown Elkhorn location. Son Jerry continues to manage Big Red Scorebooks. Although Gene was officially retired from coaching, he remained active in Elkhorn High School Sports. He volunteered as a honorary assistant coach for the girl's basketball team from 2006 to 2018.

Gene passed away on October 20, 2019 at Elk Ridge Assisted Living in Elkhorn at the age of 95 years, 6 months and 14 days. He was preceded in death by his wife Ruth, brother Loren and sister Bobbi. Gene is survived by sons and daughters-in-law Jim and Mary of Stayton, OR; John and Lisa of LaVista, NE; Jerry and Corina of Omaha; Joe and Peg of North Platte, NE and Dave and Cathy Dunham of Bennington, KS. brother Gary (Judy) Knoell of Fremont. Sister Joyce Gumb of Fremont. Cherished friend Darlene Hazard of Omaha; 14 grandchildren Eric and Emily Kruger, Michael Kruger, Sara Kruger, Savanna and Frank Hempel, Jeremy, Nathan and Joshua Dunham, Brittany and Caleb Peasinger, Breanna and Dave Kruger, Drew and Kristin Holzer and Taylor Holzer; 8 great grandchildren Aria, Barrett, Cogan and Daxton Peasinger, Gage, Catelyn, Kristopher and Eli Holzer and the family is anxiously awaiting the arrival of two more great grandsons.

# Previous Events

## Family will receive friends

OCT **24**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Reichmuth Funeral Home - Omaha / Elkhorn  
21901 W. Maple Rd.  
P.O. Box 711  
Elkhorn, NE 68022  
402-289-2222  
services@reichmuthfuneralhomes.com  
<https://www.reichmuthfuneralhomes.com/>

## Service

OCT **25**. 10:30 AM (CT)

Bethany Lutheran Church  
4200 N 204th Street  
Elkhorn, NE 68022

## Graveside

OCT **25** (CT)

Prospect Hill Cemetery of Elkhorn  
21901 W. Maple Road  
Omaha, NE 68022

# Tribute Wall



“ *Reichmuth Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Gene Marvin Kruger*



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**Reichmuth Funeral Home** - October 24, 2019 at 11:47 AM



“ *Gene Marvin Kruger*

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December 10, 2022 at 09:12 AM



“ *I called him Coach Kruger whenever I saw him; but to my Grandma and my Great-Aunt he was Gene; they were the identical twins down at Farmer Browns. He and Ruth were regulars down there; my Grandmother would introduce me to Coach Kruger , and he gave me several of his Big Red Score Books from his basement, as I was starting coaching Boys Basketball in 1983. Gene was a fine gentlemen, who would always ask about my teams and my family from Arlington who farmed there. I will always appreciate the times, I had a chance to talk to him at State Basketball or down at Farmer Browns. He lived a life well served God Bless him and his family.*  
*Pat Dunklau*

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**Patrick Dunklau** - October 24, 2019 at 09:01 PM

MU

“ I have a lot of memories of Mr. Kruger Including a trip to Bemidji, Minnesota with Joe and his parents. The Lake was called Two Acres and the joke was, What do you get when you get kicked between the legs?" I also remember falling on the basketball floor during a side-to-side drill and Mr. Kruger asking if I tripped over the painted lines. He was a very talented man and remember him painting the Elkhorn Oil and Propane sign on the large propane tank with my dad, which is where Ta H Zouka Park is now located. God-bless Mr. Kruger and his family.

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**Mitch Ulrich** - October 24, 2019 at 06:22 PM

BH

“ It was a pleasure to know Coach Kruger. He transcended time in his ability to connect with student-athletes and coaches. Gene loved Elkhorn and our school-community with all his heart. His steady support was always appreciated and he will be truly missed. Please accept our condolences.

*Bary Habrock*

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**Bary Habrock** - October 24, 2019 at 03:25 PM

PR

“ I knew Gene most of my life as Jerry and I have been friends since elementary school. He was an amazing guy and had a huge impact on both the Elkhorn schools and the community. He will be greatly missed by many. My condolences and best wishes for Jerry and the rest of the family.

*Phil Reedy*

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**Phil Reedy** - October 24, 2019 at 12:30 PM

CF

“ So sorry to hear of the loss of your father. He was a truly great man. I'm not sure when I first met Coach Kruger. My father, Roger Higgins, coached against him for many years. They became friends besides your father being a huge mentor in my fathers life. I think they had a lot in common, especially both being raised by their grandparents. I was a track coach for many years at Roncalli and would always look forward to meets with Elkhorn because I got to talk to him. It was always a privilege. He will be missed.

*Cecilia Higgins-Finley*

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**Cecilia Finley** - October 24, 2019 at 10:02 AM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Gene Marvin Kruger.*



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October 23, 2019 at 09:40 PM

DB

“ I first met Gene in 1949 when I was a Senior at Elkhorn High School.

Gene was my coach on the first football team in Elkhorn High School history. Over the years I became a close friend that extended over 70 years. Gene kept me "up to date" on what was happening in and around Elkhorn and especially the sports teams. The times that I was able to spend with Gene, were so special to me and I will forever hold those memories in my heart. The loss that I feel is great as it will be for so many. He was a pillar to his family, friends, students, and acquaintances, and he will never be forgotten.

*My sincere condolences. Don Baker*

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**Don Baker** - October 23, 2019 at 05:46 PM

DB

“ Just think of all of the lives of people that Gene touched over the many years in athletics

for so many years. An option that all folks don't get. He will be missed by many for a lot of reasons. Please accept my sympathy

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**Dick Beechner** - October 23, 2019 at 05:28 PM

MW

“ I used to babysit with Jimmy, Johnny and then Joey back in the 1950's. Loved the whole family. Madaline Chappell Williams

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**Madaline L Williams** - October 23, 2019 at 04:42 PM

MW

“ As we celebrate Gene’s life this Friday, we mourn the loss of our brother in Christ. We are praying for God’s love to surround his family and friends as we say good-bye to a husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, friend, coach, teacher, soldier and fellow Christian. Gene will be greatly missed. We will miss his smile as he greeted you, the twinkle in his eye as he was about to tell a story, and most of all his love of life. He was a mentor and coach to so many in Elkhorn and across the state of Nebraska. The memories we have of his long life of service to others will be a blessing in the years ahead. Rest in peace, Gene –

*John 11: 17-27: "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die."*

*May God comfort you and your family - Bethany's Care Ministry*

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**Michele Willer** - October 23, 2019 at 03:49 PM

JG

“ Judy G. purchased a sympathy card for the family of Gene Marvin Kruger.



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**Judy G.** - October 23, 2019 at 11:14 AM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of Gene Marvin Kruger.



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October 23, 2019 at 10:14 AM



“ Coach Kruger was my geometry teacher when I was a sophomore. He had me enchanted with theories and all the formulas involved with figuring out square-footage. It's like the world of that kind of space came into focus through him that year. I'll never forget him.

*I send prayers that memories of him also remain and hold his family long after this day.*

*Sincerely, Linda Nelson Gardner*

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**Linda Gardner** - October 23, 2019 at 08:38 AM



“ Just read of Coach Gene's passing and now feeling a sadness that will take some time to overcome. Gene was one of the all time gentlemen as well as a great coach and teacher of the young people of his beloved town of Elkhorn. Gosh, everybody knows that! I was honored to have coached against Gene when at Ralston HS way back in the 60's and 70's. We had some wonderful contests that will be in my memory forever. R.I.P. Coach! You were the best!

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**Bob Mackie** - October 22, 2019 at 10:15 PM



“ *Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses was purchased for the family of Gene Marvin Kruger.*



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October 22, 2019 at 08:26 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Gene Marvin Kruger.*



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October 22, 2019 at 08:18 PM



“ *Jan Bray lit a candle in memory of Gene Marvin Kruger*



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**Jan Bray** - October 22, 2019 at 07:56 PM



“ *So sorry for your loss.  
Norma Vasek.*

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**Norma Vasek** - October 22, 2019 at 06:40 PM

AC

“ Rosemary and I send our Extreme Condolences to Gene’s Family, he was a wonderful Friend and will be missed. Al Clair

Al Clair - October 22, 2019 at 04:18 PM

EG

“ Our condolences on the loss of a very special man. Gene and Darlene visited the Ozone regularly to hear Gooch and his Las Vegas Big Band. Gene was a delight to visit with. WE loved hearing stories of his coaching career. He will be missed but always remembered.

Elaine & Mike Gurciullo - October 22, 2019 at 01:56 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Gene Marvin Kruger.



October 22, 2019 at 01:14 PM

SS

“ When I started my Teaching and Coaching career at EHS in 1973 Gene took me under his wing. He showed me what integrity was, how to discipline but be fair, how to organize different situations, what hard work produces and what it took to be a Coach in the early years of Girls Athletics. I am, who I am today, because of Gene.  
Coach Sally Studnicka

Sally Studnicka - October 21, 2019 at 07:55 PM