



## Gene Van De Kieft

October 19, 1950 - June 21, 2016

Gene Van De Kieft, 65, of Oskaloosa passed away Tuesday evening, June 21, 2016, at Iowa Methodist Medical Center in Des Moines. Gerald Eugene Van De Kieft, son of Marion George and Margaret (Roozeboom) Van De Kieft, was born October 19, 1950, in Oskaloosa, Iowa. The family lived on a farm near Otley, Iowa when Gene was in elementary school and after his eighth-grade year, the family moved to a farm near New Sharon. Gene was a 1968 graduate of North Mahaska High School. November 27, 1968, he married Mary Ellen Van Veldhuizen, at the home of her parents in Oskaloosa. Gene worked as a carpenter for a few years and then as a farm hand until 1975, when he and Mary moved to their farm SW of Oskaloosa in the East Des Moines Township. In 1980, Gene and Mary felt called to become foster parents to troubled young men, ages 13-17. From 1980 to 1996, they fostered over 40 youngsters, some staying as long as three years. Gene and Mary gave these young men a stable home-life and taught them life skills they would need to succeed. Gene had a quality that these young men were drawn to, and most of them respected him for his unconditional love and acceptance. In 2002, Gene began working for Unicco, a maintenance company that served Cargill plants. He primarily worked at the Eddyville plant, but he also traveled to Cedar Rapids, IA, Memphis, TN and Dayton, OH as was required. He retired from Cargill in 2008. Gene served on the Eddyville School Board for three years. During this time school consolidation was taking place, and he devoted much time and thought to this responsibility. He also served as an

East Des Moines Township Trustee, another duty he approached with his whole heart. Gene adored his grandchildren and they him: they went camping together, he taught many how to drive, he was their short order cook – making them each whatever they wanted for lunch, they picked apples together out of the bucket of an end-loader and then he taught them how to make apple pies. Gene's favorite areas to visit were the mountains and the Southwest. He loved the out-of-doors and always considered himself a farmer even when he wasn't farming. Gene was a deeply spiritual person, but was not very religious; he considered the beauty of God's creation a far better place to commune with his Maker than a church. Gene was honest to the core, and he was a totally committed son, husband, father, grandfather, and friend. Gene's family includes his wife, Mary of Oskaloosa; daughters and sons-in-law: Leanne Grimes of Grove, OK, Sandra and Tom Komadina of Wentzville, MO, and Sonia and Tim Olson of Polk City, IA; nine grandchildren: Brennen, Brooke, and Riley Grimes; Nathan, Ellen, Jillian, and Madalyn Komadina; and Emma and Maggie Baumgardner; one great-grandchild, Aiden Grimes; brothers and sisters-in-law, John and Anne Van De Kieft of Pella and Maurice and Ruth Van De Kieft of Oskaloosa; and his mother, Margaret Van De Kieft of Pella. He is also survived by his wife's family: Rosemary Van Veldhuizen of Oskaloosa, Lee Spencer of Carlisle, Dale and Linda Van Veldhuizen of Oskaloosa, Erma and Merle Nunnikhoven of Pella, Marvin and Judy Van Veldhuizen of Oskaloosa and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his father, Marion Van De Kieft and his brother-in-law, Ron Van Veldhuizen and a sister-in-law, Caryl Spencer. A Time of Remembrance will be held for Gene at 11 a.m., Friday, June 24, 2016, at the Faith Community Church in Eddyville with Rev. Gary Roozeboom officiating. The family will greet friends and relatives following the service until 2 p.m. As was his wish, his body has been cremated. His ashes will be buried privately at Henness Cemetery.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Gene Van De Kieft*

October 05, 2023 at 11:57 PM



“ *Many of my favorite childhood memories include Gene. He was the best cousin ever. My prayers are with the family.*

**Karen Van Maanen Jenkins** - June 24, 2016 at 12:00 AM



“ *Prayers to Mary and all of the family. We will miss Gene alot but have lots of good memories of all of our good times and Friday night excursions. He was a good man and a GREAT FRIEND!*

**Greg & Linda Life** - June 23, 2016 at 12:00 AM



“ *My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family during this difficult time.*

**Lois Bordewyk** - June 23, 2016 at 12:00 AM



“ *Van De Kieft Family, I'm so sorry for your loss. You're in my thoughts and prayers.*

**Molly (Morrissey) Sterner** - June 22, 2016 at 12:00 AM