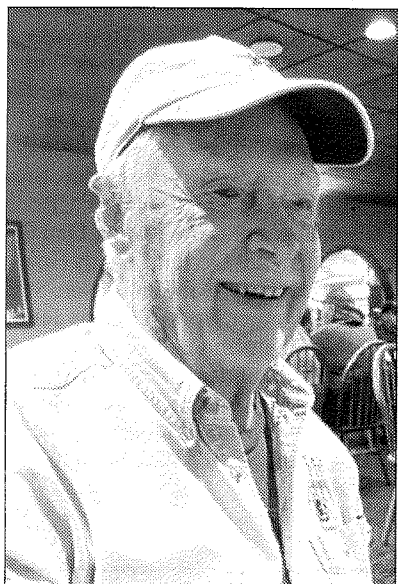


Gary Neal Foster



Gary Neal Foster, 89, of Grinnell, Iowa, passed away September 9, 2024, after a short hospital stay at Iowa Lutheran Hospital in Des Moines, Iowa.

A gathering to celebrate his life will be held at Smith Funeral Home in Grinnell on Monday, October 14, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. After a military salute to honor him for his service to our nation, family and friends will remember him with stories and fellowship until 3:00 p.m. Memorials may be designated to the Grinnell United Methodist Church, or the Gary Foster Memorial Fund, left at the funeral home, or mailed in c/o Smith Funeral Home, PO Box 368, Grinnell, IA 50112.

Gary was born on November 3, 1934, in Victor, Iowa, to Rex and Thelma (Shaul) Foster. Gary grew up in Honey Creek Township with his two sisters, Marilyn and Donna. He graduated from Victor High School with the class of 1953. He attended Coe College for a year before enlisting in the Army in 1954. He served during the Korean War and was honorably discharged in 1956. He was a member of the Grinnell United Methodist Church. He enjoyed attending church services and looked forward to chatting with friends there, went out to lunch afterwards, and then ended his weekend with Sunday night popcorn.

Gary farmed, sold insurance and worked for General Telephone for many years as a corporate pilot. He finished his career as a salesman for Harris Dracon. After his retirement at age 52, Gary became a "snowbird" spending half the year in Texas and the other half at the Lake of the Ozarks, Mo. Two years ago, he moved to Seeland Park in Grinnell to be closer to family, after Marlene Hahn, his partner of 14 years, passed away. Even though he only lived there a short time, he made many friends. He enjoyed the exercise classes that are offered and proudly introduced chair-volleyball to the community. He was known for his friendly smile and quick wit as well as his friendly banter.

Gary enjoyed all forms of transportation. Favorite pastimes included flying airplanes since the age of 16, boating at Holiday Lake and Lake of the Ozarks, RVing to several places, riding motorcycles and trikes, and driving not only his various pick-ups and SUVs, but his decked out golf carts as well. In his younger years he enjoyed hunting and fishing. He loved to golf, religiously viewed or listened to every St. Louis Cardinals game, and went dancing with Marlene whenever they could. He will be remembered for his kindness, charm, his sense of humor, his ability to engage anyone he came across in conversation, and especially the way he giggled while telling his "dad" jokes. Gary's children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, made him proud and he enjoyed spending time with them.

Gary is survived by children, Tim (Flor Frau) Foster and Tracee (Dave) VanArkel; his grandchildren, Silvia Foster-Frau, Noah Foster-Frau, Katee Shinkle and Zach (Grace) VanArkel; great grandchildren, Ross, Vance, and Lynlee Shinkle, and Henry and Finn VanArkel; and his niece Deb Davidson. He is preceded in death by his parents, Rex and Thelma, his sisters, Marilyn Foster and Donna VanLancker, and longtime partner, Marlene.

GHR, Tms. 9/19/24