



## Phillip E. "Gene" Brown

July 29, 1929 - August 18, 2024

With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of Phillip E. (Gene) Brown, who died peacefully on Sunday, August 18th, 2024, at the age of 95 years old. Born on July 29th, 1929, Gene was the youngest of 11 children born to Mamie and Phillip Brown of Argenta, IL.

Gene graduated high school in Monticello, IL in 1948. He then studied Physical Education for 2 ½ years at Illinois State University. Gene joined the Air Force in August of 1951, where he proudly served in the Air Traffic Control division. He was stationed in Texas, Mississippi, Nebraska and Kentucky. Gene also served in the Korean War and was honorably discharged from the Air Force on July 31st, 1959.

Gene met the love of his life, Carolyn VanderVeen, in 1960 on a blind date set up by a friend in Bloomington, IL. Gene and Carolyn were wed on June 23rd, 1962, in a small, private service at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Streator, IL. Gene and Carolyn shared a love that was deep, tangible and inspirational. Gene and Carolyn had a zest for the outdoors and enjoyed fishing, hunting and golfing together. They also enjoyed cheering on their beloved St. Louis Cardinals.

Gene's professional career started at General Motors, where he worked for 4 years. He then began his career at State Farm Insurance as an adjuster

before transitioning to the role of an agent. Gene retired in 1992 from State Farm after being an agent for 21 years in Sterling, IL. In 1997, Gene and Carolyn moved to Havana, IL, returning to Carolyn's hometown to be close to her family.

Together, Gene and Carolyn raised their beautiful daughter, Cherie (Brown) DeWulf . Gene and Carolyn poured their hearts and souls into raising Cherie and promoting a family structure focused on love, kindness, helping others, hard work, being humble, faith and love of the great outdoors. Many of Cherie's favorite memories with her parents revolve around a good fishing story, hunting and working on the family farm.

Gene loved spoiling and doting on his two granddaughters, Katy Fillipp and Kristi Ahrens. Gene and Carolyn attended countless sporting events all over Illinois while watching Katy and Kristi play volleyball and softball. Some of their favorite memories center on playing cards around the kitchen table while bantering about who was trying to cheat at Hand and Foot.

The absolute light of Gene's life were his five great grandchildren: Brixon, Beckam and Blayke Fillipp and Theo and Vera Ahrens. Gene loved displaying their artwork proudly in his home and his walls were covered with pictures of them. He carried pictures of his great grandchildren in his wallet and always found a good excuse to show them off to his friends around town.

Gene was a good friend to all and wouldn't hesitate to extend a helping hand to someone in need. He would always have a good joke that he kept tucked away for just the right occasion or when you least expected it. Gene was a man of faith and found comfort in knowing he would be walking with the Lord in his death and being reunited with his wife, Carolyn.

Gene is preceded in death by his wife, Carolyn Brown, and great-grandson,

Beckam Fillipp. Gene is survived by his daughter Cherie DeWulf (Keith Howard), granddaughters Katy (Tyler) Fillipp and Kristi (Teddy) Ahrens and great-grandchildren Brixon, Blayke, Theo and Vera and countless other cherished family.

Visitation will be held at Hurley Funeral Home in Havana, IL on Saturday August 24th, 2024 from 11:00 am until 1:00 pm. Graveside services will start at 1:30 pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery in Havana, IL.

In lieu of flowers or plants, donations can be made to St. John's Lutheran Church of Bath, IL or the Sycamore Education Foundation. The Sycamore Education Foundation has a scholarship fund set up to honor Beckam North Fillipp, Gene's great-grandson.

# Cemetery Details

## Laurel Hill Cemetery

1105 E Laurel Ave  
Havana, IL 62644  
(309) 543-2986

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**AUG 24.** 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Hurley Funeral Home - Havana  
217 North Plum Street  
P.O. Box #648  
Havana, IL 62644  
(309) 543-2244  
<https://www.hurleyfh.com/>

## Graveside Service

**AUG 24.** 1:30 PM (CT)

Laurel Hill Cemetery  
1105 E Laurel Ave  
Havana, IL 62644  
(309) 543-2986

# Tribute Wall

SS

“ I was friends with Gene and Carolyn for many years after we met in Sterling, Illinois. We had many good times and good meals together. I just tried calling Gene to chat and got recording that phone number wasn't valid. I'm so sorry that he is gone but happy the he is with Carolyn again. Rest in peace both of you.

Shirley Seabert - December 06, 2024 at 12:57 PM

DG

“ Sorry for your loss. He was a very nice person to work for and also a cardinal fan. We discussed the team a lot. Don & Joanne Gentry.



Donald Gentry - August 23, 2024 at 10:36 PM

NH

“ Nancy Holtz purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Phillip E. "Gene" Brown.



Nancy Holtz - August 21, 2024 at 02:27 PM

NH

“ Nancy Holtz planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Phillip E. "Gene" Brown.

Nancy Holtz - August 21, 2024 at 02:27 PM



“ *Larry and Mary Hundt sent a virtual gift in memory of Phillip Brown* ”



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**Larry and Mary Hundt** - August 21, 2024 at 08:34 AM