

Obituary

Willius Burkey

Willius Burkey, 85, went to be with the Lord on Saturday, Sept. 1, 2007, at his home in Seward at the age of 85 years, 7 months and 20 days. He was born on January 12, 1922, to John C. and Sarah (Burkholder) Burkey near Beaver Crossing, Nebraska.

In his youth, Willius accepted Christ as his personal Savior and was baptized at West Fairview Mennonite Church, where he was a member at the time of his death. He was united in marriage to Elaine Stauffer at her parents' home near rural Milford on March 14, 1944. To this union were born four children: Fred, Dan, Sara and Mary.

Willius and Elaine lived and farmed in the Friend and Beaver Crossing areas until they moved to Phoenix, Ariz. in 1961 for health reasons. In Phoenix, he worked at a cabinet shop, drawing blueprints, building and installing cabinets. Many of the cabinets were built for the Sun City, Ariz. retirement community. In 1970, Willius and his family moved back to Beaver Crossing to help care for his mother. During that time, he started Country Wood Shop in the area. After his mother's death, Willius and his family returned to Phoenix where they owned and operated a trailer court and rentals. They enjoyed welcoming the many snowbirds who wintered there. Willius and Elaine moved to Wickenburg, Ariz. in 1988. In both Phoenix and Wickenburg, they cared for Elaine's parents. When Willius developed symptoms of Alz-heimer's disease, they moved back to Nebraska in 1999 to be closer to family. In 2002, he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

Willius loved and spent many hours reading and studying the Bible. He began each morning whistling the song and quoting the words, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24). He enjoyed woodworking and spent many hours crafting furniture, cabinets and wooden games and puzzles in his own shop.

Survivors include his wife, Elaine, Seward; son and daughter-in-law, Dan and Linda Burkey, Parker, Colo.; daughters and son-in-law, Sara and Galen Yoder, Mylo, N.D. and Mary Burkey of Seward; 10 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; brother and sister-in-law, Lloyal and Faye Burkey, Beaver Crossing; sister and brother-in-law, Esther and Ivan Nisly, Independence, Ore.; daughters-in-law, Bonnie Burkey, Wahoo, Lennice Longstein of Fremont; sisters-in-law, Erma Burkey, Milford, Nina Burkey, York, Verneal Burkey, Seward, Imogene Hostetler, Dorchester; brother-in-law, Cleve Stauffer, Lincoln; many nieces, nephews, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Willius was preceded in death by his parents, John and Sarah Burkey; son, Fred; brothers, Melvin and Floyd; sister, Dorothy Burkey; an infant sister; parents-in-law, Philip and Verna Stauffer; a brother-in-law, Dale J. Hostetler and a sister-in-law, Sally Stauffer.

A Funeral Service was held at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 4, 2007, at West Fairview Mennonite Church, Rural Beaver Crossing, with Pastors Gale Oswald, Dale Oswald and Lyle Kropf officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery. Song Leader Gabriel Burkey led the congregation in singing, "Face to

Face". Octet singers David and Loretta Burkey, Patrick Kremer, Richard Burkey, Julie Schweitzer, Rachel Miller, Janelle Oswald and Gabriel Burkey sang, "The First Look", "The Man On The Middle Cross", and "Even So, Lord Jesus, Come". Graveside Selections were, "In That Beautiful City of Gold" and "What A Day That Will Be". Pallbearers were: Bruce, Barry, Bryan and John Burkey, Jalen, Dylan and Rylan Yoder and Luke Brossart. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to the family for later designation. Lauber-Moore Funeral Home, Milford, is entrusted with arrangements. Condolences may be sent to the family at laubermoore.com .