



Gene Francis Craven

February 14, 1927 - August 5, 2014

Gene Craven passed peacefully from this life on August 5th, 2014 in Corvallis, where he had lived with his wife Norma for 57 years.

Gene was born February 14, 1927 to Frank James and Lena Pearl Craven on the family's homestead located near Norwood, Kansas. After graduation from Neosho Falls High School in 1945, Gene served in the United States Navy for two years. Following his discharge, he assisted with his father's farming operations near Neosho Falls and Colony, Kansas.

Knowing that he did not want to be a farmer the rest of his life, Gene graduated from Kansas State Teachers College in Pittsburg Kansas in 1954 with a BS in Science Education. He was very involved in school activities, serving as Student Council president his senior year and editor of the school yearbook.

It was at Kansas State Teachers College that he meet his future wife, home economics education major Norma Elaine Wilson. They married the day after graduation, May 28, 1954, and began their teaching careers at Bird City Rural High School. Two years later, they moved to Concordia Kansas, where Gene taught physics and chemistry. In 1957, Gene was accepted into an Academic Year Institute (AYI) for science teachers at Oregon State College, which brought him to Corvallis.

After concluding the AYI with a Master's Degree, Gene accepted a position at OSU as an instructor in Science Education and General Science, earning a PhD in 1966. During his 32 years of teaching, Gene worked with foreign science educators in conjunction with the U.S. Dept of Education, and did sabbaticals at New York University and the Regional Center for Science and Mathematics in Penang, Malaysia. He retired as Professor emeritus in 1990 after 32 years.

Gene was active in several profession organizations including the National Science Teachers Association, the Association for Research in Science Education, and Phi Delta Kappa.

After retiring, Gene drove for Dial-A-Bus for over 10 years, served as membership chairman for the Association for Retired Public Employees, and has been an active member of the Corvallis First United Methodist Church.

Gene enjoyed camping and hiking with his family, fishing, RVing, traveling, and photography. But his real passion in life was gardening, becoming a Master Gardener through OSU Extension. His yard was a beautiful display of local plants and flowers.

Gene's life was devoted to helping others, individually improving the lives of many others in small but significant ways. He believed in living every day to its fullest potential with a positive, "can do" attitude and with a smile on his face. Gene is preceded in death by his brother Wayne Craven of Overland Park, KS. He is survived by his sister Doris George of Waverly, Kansas, his brother Donald Craven of Cincinnati, OH, his wife Norma of Corvallis, and three daughters, Gina Huey (Dave) of Corvallis, Lori Krause (Steve) of Raleigh, NC, and Cinda Craven (Bill) of Santa Rosa, CA. He has two grandchildren, Jeffrey Krause of Greensboro, NC and Corrine Krause of Raleigh, NC.

A private family service will be held. A celebration of life will be announced in the Spring. Memorials in his name can be made to the OSU Foundation or to the charity of your choice.

Tribute Wall

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“ We were so sorry to hear of Gene's death. He was a wonderful person. My father died just a few weeks before Gene did and Gene and Norma sent us a lovely note of condolence and when we called on Gene and Norma shortly after my father died they were both very kind and sympathetic. My father admired Gene for the work he did in the important field of science education because my father, a surgeon, knew how vital it is to interest young people in careers in science and medicine.

My mom and I very much enjoyed stopping by to see Norma and Gene when we were out on afternoon or evening strolls. They were always so welcoming and patient with our chatter! Gene, knowing my mom is an avid gardener, generously gave her some unusual grass to plant in her own garden and we will think of him as we tend it. That was characteristic of him. He noticed her interest in the grass in his garden and her pleasure in it and he took immediate action to see to it that she could have some for her own yard.

He was a kindhearted, interesting, generous person. I admired him for his worthwhile career and his many volunteer activities. He was a real gentleman and it was clear that he and Norma shared a loving marriage of mutual respect and affection and were proud of their children. He was a credit not only to our local community and university but advanced science education internationally. We will miss him a lot and are grateful to have known him.

Hope Leman - August 09, 2014 at 11:49 AM