



Gary Ward

November 2, 1944 - August 28, 2023

Gary Lee Ward, 78, of Cape Girardeau, passed away at his home on August 28, 2023.

Gary was born November 2, 1944 just outside the small town of Risco, Mo. His parents, A.B. and Irene Lancaster Ward, were cotton farmers. Unlike most kids his age, Gary loved picking cotton. By the age of nine, Gary picked 200 pounds of cotton in one day. By the age of 12, he picked his first 300 pounds in one day! He was very proud of that. Most grownups (at that time) picked a maximum of 150 pounds in one day.

Gary graduated from Risco High School in 1962. He attended and graduated from Arkansas State University in 1967 with a BS degree in Radio/TV Journalism. While attending Arkansas State, he served as student Station Manager, KASU radio. He was also a columnist for the college newspaper, the Arkansas State Herald.

In 1967, Gary joined the U.S. Navy. There he served as the co-editor of the Jax Air News, the base newspaper at the Jacksonville, Florida Naval Air Station. He also served at the Naval Air Station, Norfolk Virginia, as speech writer for the Commander of the Atlantic Fleet Naval Air Force.

On May 31, 1974, Gary married Linda Thurston. In 1977, they moved to

Bloomington, Illinois, where Gary took a job as a broadcaster and writer for the Illinois Farm Bureau. Linda took a job there in financial reporting.

In 1985, Gary and Linda moved to the southwest Missouri Ozarks near Bolivar, Missouri. Gary had retired but worked to help make their 30 acres of woodland into a parklike area. He also wrote (and had published) two mystery novels: "Two from Tennessee" and "Renegade Re". Linda continued to work in Springfield, Mo. She was an actuary and Vice President at American National Property and Casualty Insurance.

Gary and Linda traveled extensively through Europe and took several cruises. Gary often said that he lived a charmed and wonderful life, especially after meeting and marrying Linda! This is where Linda gets to add a few words: What a great adventure it has been with Gary, my one and only love. I knew I could always count on him for anything. He was the real deal - genuine, caring, and funny. I couldn't have chosen a better life partner.

In May 2021 Gary and Linda moved to the Chateau Girardeau, a retirement community in Cape Girardeau. Gary and Linda made many wonderful friends at the Chateau.

Gary was preceded in death by his parents.

He is survived by his wife, Linda Ward of Cape Girardeau; sister and brother-in-law, Kaye and Larry Richardson; nephews, Adam Richardson and Cullen Richardson; and grand nephews and nieces, Sawyer, Aubrey, Isla, Gisele, and Ivo Richardson; and Linda's siblings, Barbara (Terry) Gilliam, Jerry (Debbie) Thurston, Darrell (Linda) Thurston, Benny (Phyllis) Thurston, and Bonnie Willis.

Visitation will be 10:00 am to 12:00 pm Thursday at Ford & Sons Mt. Auburn

Chapel in Cape Girardeau.

Graveside will be at 1:00 pm at Rose Hill Cemetery in Pulaski, Illinois with the Rev. Gene Lancaster officiating.

Memorial contributions may be given to SEMO Pets, 180 Weston St., Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 or a charity of choice.

Online condolences may be made at www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Rose Hill Cemetery - Pulaski

Pulaski, IL

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 31. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Ford & Sons Mt. Auburn Funeral Home
1001 N. Mt. Auburn Rd.
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(573) 334-1313
info@fordandsonsfuneralhome.com
<https://www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com/>

Graveside Service

AUG 31. 1:00 PM.

Rose Hill Cemetery - Pulaski
Pulaski, IL

Tribute Wall

LS

“ So very sorry for your loss, our deepest sympathies and prayers for comfort. Patsy and Luther Stokes

Luther & Patsy Stokes - September 01, 2023 at 10:25 AM

BW

“ Bill W. purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Gary Ward.



Bill W. - August 30, 2023 at 02:00 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Gary Ward.



August 29, 2023 at 07:06 PM