



Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner

February 27, 1942 - September 3, 2018

Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner, age 76, of Albia, passed away on Monday, September 3, 2018, at Mercy Medical Center in Des Moines, surrounded by his loved ones.

He was born on February 27, 1942, to Walter Sr. and Mildred (Stewart) Gardner on the family farm in Bluff Creek Township. He grew up and graduated from the Albia High School with the Class of 1960, where he was a member of the National Honor Society. On April 12, 1964, he was united in marriage to Shirley Koger at the United Brethren Church in Albia. To this union, 3 children were born, Debi, Jeff, and Angie.

Junior was a grain and livestock farmer all of his life. He worked as a crop insurance adjuster and later became a sales agent selling crop insurance until present time. He was a past member of the United Brethren Church and a current member of the Trinity United Methodist Church in Albia where he played an active role on several committees. He was a true man of God which was evidenced in the way that he treated his wife, children, and friends. He was also on the FHA Board, county committees, and was a 4-H leader. In 2014, he was inducted into the Farm Bureau Hall of Fame.

Junior enjoyed being outdoors, hunting, gardening, and playing horseshoes. He also liked playing card games, such as pitch and cribbage, and playing

snooker. Junior and Shirley enjoyed dancing and were known for the “Jitterbug”. They loved to travel together and have been to numerous places, including Australia, Alaska, and Hawaii. While traveling, Junior always carried his camera and enjoyed taking photographs of the sites. He was an avid Hawkeye fan and enjoyed watching football and basketball games. He was extremely talented in making barbed wire sculptures of all sorts, including life size sculptures of a deer, a bear, and an eagle. There was nearly nothing that he could not construct out of barbed wire. He took pride in making barbed wire crosses and enjoyed sharing them with anyone he felt could use a lift in spirits. He never knew a stranger, loved visiting with others and truly took an active interest in others. Above all else, he delighted in spending time with his family and friends, especially his grandchildren. Among his many other talents, he played the guitar and often sang “You Are My Sunshine” to his wife and children.

Junior is survived by his wife of 54 years, Shirley, his children, Debi (Ronnie) Delaney of Albia, Jeff (Lynn) Gardner of Altoona, and Angie (Darryl) Bresson of Ankeny; 11 grandchildren, Nick (Kalei) Douglas, Eric (Danielle) Douglas, Taylor (Nick) Scott, Brody and Tannor Gardner, Hannah, Claudia, Jack, and Emma Bresson, and AbbyGale and Ronnie Delaney Jr.; 7 great grandchildren, Chase Douglas and Piper Douglas, Willow and Sage Scott, Lila Slayton, Kiba Hemphill, and James Delaney; a brother, Ray (Pat Hoelzel) Gardner; and a sister, Dalene Bateman. He is also survived by many nieces, nephews, cousins, and good friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Walter and Mildred and a brother, Clyde Gardner.

Visitation will be held from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday, September 10, 2018, at Tharp Funeral Home in Albia, with Junior’s family present throughout to greet family and friends.

Funeral services will be held at 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, September 11, 2018, at the Trinity United Methodist Church in Albia with Pastor Roger Henry officiating. A private family burial will take place at Selection Cemetery in Albia.

A memorial has been established to the Welcome Home Soldier Memorial.

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP **10.** 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Tharp Funeral Home
116 Benton Ave.
Albia, IA 52531
(641) 932-3129
<https://www.tharpfh.com/>

Funeral Service

SEP **11.** 10:30 AM (CT)

Trinity United Methodist Church
1117 Benton Ave East
Albia, IA 52531

Tribute Wall



“ *Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner*

January 30, 2023 at 05:06 AM



“ *Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner*

January 30, 2023 at 02:53 AM



“ *Angela Borella lit a candle in memory of
Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner*



Angela Borella - September 12, 2018 at 05:50 PM



“ *I'm so sorry for your loss. May you feel God's loving presence during this time and in the difficult days ahead. You're in my prayers.*

Sincerely,

Kim

Kim Jolly - September 11, 2018 at 09:18 AM

VF

“ *Velma Furlin lit a candle in memory of Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner*



Velma Furlin - September 10, 2018 at 09:31 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner.*



September 10, 2018 at 07:08 PM

TT

“ *The Talaska's purchased the Simply Elegant Spatiphyllum for the family of Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner.*



The Talaska's - September 10, 2018 at 10:55 AM

IF

“ *Irene, Wayne, Janice and Families purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner.*



Irene, Wayne, Janice and Families - September 10, 2018 at 10:14 AM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner.*



September 10, 2018 at 09:16 AM



“ *Our sympathy and prayers are with you and your family. Walter was a nice man with a great smile. Always enjoyed seeing you both and visiting with you at the class reunions. God Bless, Wal and .Georgina Beary*

Georgina Beary - September 09, 2018 at 08:06 PM



“ *It was my honor and privilege to work and know Junior Gardner. I was the Iowa Supervisor for Fireman's Fund AgriBusiness from 1998-2004 and Junior was an adjuster for me. I learned a great deal from him. I loved him as an adjuster because I could just assign him a claim and knew that it would be completed correctly. More recently I was with Diversified Crop Insurance and again had the privilege to work with him in the agency. One of the more knowledgeable persons in crop insurance I have ever known. More than this he was just a great person to know and work with.*

Ron Lundblad

Ron Lundblad - September 09, 2018 at 03:59 PM

JG

“ A couple years ago when my husband and I traveled back to Albia from California, Jr. and Shirley showed us Jr's amazing collection of his barbed wire art. I had never seen anything like it. He had such an unusual talent and Jr. gave us one of his barbed wire crosses. It hangs on our wall and I think of Jr. every time I look at it. To Shirley, my dearest friend since kindergarten, and her entire family, I send my sincerest sympathy.

Jannett Gibb Gibson - September 08, 2018 at 01:29 PM



“ Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner.



September 08, 2018 at 08:33 AM

SK

“ Sherri Kellar lit a candle in memory of Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner



Sherri kellar - September 07, 2018 at 05:41 PM

SK

Such a great guy and friend. Jr. Will truly b missed

Sherri kellar - September 07, 2018 at 05:42 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray* was purchased for the family of Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner.



September 07, 2018 at 01:31 PM



“ *Great Western Bank* purchased the *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* for the family of Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner.



Great Western Bank - September 07, 2018 at 09:59 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner.



September 07, 2018 at 09:12 AM



“ *I'm so sorry to hear about Walters passing. He was such an awesome member of the class of 1960, we will miss him. May God bless you.*

Mary West

Mary West - September 06, 2018 at 06:57 PM

JG

“ Sorry to hear of your loss but cherish your many memories. Walter was a classmate in the great class of 1960 and there are lots of good memories from our school days. I am sure he will be missed by the entire Albia community. Thoughts and prayers to you and family.

Johneta Goodwin - September 06, 2018 at 10:32 AM

TA

“ We used to live on the K road and Junior farmed the field behind our house. He would always find time to drive by the fence and take Brady for a ride in his tractor. He was a kind, caring man. So sorry for your loss.

Terri Archibald - September 06, 2018 at 09:34 AM

BA

“ Junior farmed the land directly East of my childhood home on T31 North of Albia when I was a little boy. Without fail, he would give me a ride in his tractor if he saw me outside playing. Many of my fondest childhood memories involve those tractor rides. Rest in peace my friend.

Brady Archibald.

Brady Archibald - September 06, 2018 at 05:39 AM

DD

“ Our community has lost a "grand" guy -Jr. was so very generous to our Welcome Home Soldier benefit each year, making something so unique out of barb wire for the auction.... I always enjoyed his visits and admired his talent with that ! He was truly one of a kind and will be sorely missed. Rest in Peace dear friend. Jerry & Diane Durian

Diane Durian - September 05, 2018 at 11:31 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner.



September 05, 2018 at 08:10 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of Walter "Junior" Ellsworth Gardner.



September 05, 2018 at 07:41 PM