

DuBois , NE

Gayle L. Hecht was born on January 13, 1935 on the family farm southeast of DuBois NE, and went to his eternal rest on December 13, 2024 at the age of 89. Born to Walter and Lena (Boehmer) Hecht, Gayle was the third of three children. He was born 2 months premature and was kept in a shoebox behind the wood stove to keep him warm during that Nebraska winter. He kept that fighting spirit with him until the end.

Gayle attended school at Cincinnati country school near his home on the farm until it burned down when he was in 6th grade, and then at DuBois where he would graduate from high school in 1953. In his youth he enjoyed outdoor adventures with his brother and the neighbor boys. After his graduation, he enlisted in the Army Reserve. He served for 25 years and retired as a 1st sergeant in 1978. He attended one year of college in Tarkio, MO before returning home to farm and work with his father. He went to California for two summers in the 1950s to work in automobile factories, and was often heard to begin a story with “Back when I built cars in California...”

Gayle was a member of Friedens United Church of Christ his entire life. He was confirmed in 1948, and filled many roles over the years including teaching youth Sunday School classes, sponsoring the youth group DYB, being on the Church Board, and serving as the longtime cemetery sexton. His last role at Friedens was as greeter; he was particularly well-suited for this as his favorite thing was having a conversation and making others feel welcome.

Gayle met Margaret in 1968 after being introduced through Margaret’s cousin. They were married June 7, 1970 at Park Congregational Church near Elgin NE. One son, Sean, was born to this union. They were married for over 54 years. During this time Gayle and Margaret enjoyed vacations with family, playing Canasta monthly with friends, supporting Sean at various activities, and later square dancing with the Seneca Club.

Gayle worked the family farm for many years. He drove a semi for Lortscher Agri Service for over 20 years, initially part time and then full time after selling the farm. After his retirement, he still found jobs to do in the community including driving the school bus and working for Wherry Mortuary.

Gayle was preceded in death by his parents Walter and Lena Hecht, his sister Shirley (Sisson) and brother-in-law Bill, his brother Bryce Hecht and sister-in law Ina, Margaret’s parents Katherine and Carroll Armstrong, his brother-in-law Duane Johnson, and his niece Debra (Johnson) Stoltz.

He is survived by his wife Margaret (Armstrong) and son Sean, his sister-in-law Carolyn Johnson, sister-in-law and brother-in-law Diane and Arlie Sholes, and brother-in-law and sister-in-law Bill and Val Armstrong, and many nieces and nephews.

Funeral Services 10:30 a.m., Friday, December 20, 2024 at Friedens U.C.C. Church, rural Bern, Kansas. Pastor John Poulson officiating. The service will also be livestreamed on the Wherry Mortuary Facebook page for those unable to attend. Visitation will be held Thursday, December 19, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., with family greeting friends from 5-7 p.m., at Wherry Mortuary, 919 G Street, Pawnee City, Nebraska. Interment at the Friedens U.C.C. Cemetery. Memorials to family choice for a later designation or Friedens U.C.C. Church. Online condolences may be left at www.wherrymortuary.com. Services entrusted to Wherry Mortuary, 919 G Street, Pawnee City, Nebraska.