



Robert Eugene Wethern

February 26, 1925 - July 6, 2022

Robert Eugene Wethern "Gene" 02/26/1925 - 07/06/2022

Of Coon Rapids passed away, of natural causes, peacefully in his home, Epiphany Pines Senior Housing, on July 6, 2022, at the age of 97 in the arms of his eldest daughter, Ann Marie, wearing his Cursillo Cross necklace, and holding one of many rosaries.

Preceded in death by his parents, Oliver and Katherine Wethern, loving wife of 41 years, Marion; infant sister Leona; brothers, Frank (Lois), Charles (Rita), William (Amada), David (Lucille), Leo (Eleanor); sister and brother-in-law, Dorothy and Edward Hagberg I.

Survived by children, Ann Marie Deneen (Craig), Barbara Kurtoglu (Levent), Susan Wethern-Kestner, Kay Lindner (Bill), and Christine Wicks (Randall); grandchildren, Mark Kestner, David Kestner (Jules), Katie Watkins (James), Robert Wicks, Julia Wicks, Selin Lager (James), Simon Wicks, and Valerie Lindner; nephew, Edward Hagberg, II (Ann) and family; many nieces and nephews; long-time friends, especially Mary Jean Prokop, Finlayson friends, and his Epiphany Pines Community.

Gene was born on February 26, 1925 at Anchor Hospital, St. Paul, Minnesota. He grew up in the Downtown/West 7th area in St. Paul. He attended Davis Elementary, St. Francis High School, and took a shop class at Monroe High School. In 1949, he earned a certificate in "Auto" at Dunwoody Institute in

Minneapolis. At various points in his life, he also took a couple of classes at the St. Paul Technical Vocational Institute.

For some of Gene's childhood, his Aunt Ethel and Uncle Joe cared for him because of his asthma condition that eventually improved. A few years later, he was able to participate in adventurous walks with his older brothers where they would go over the river using the Hi-Bridge to get to the West side, then onto the Mendota Bridge and back home again (10 miles). His big brother, Frank, let him tag along with his buddies many times; Frank was his hero. He participated in 'Community Sings' at Highland Park, and knew all the songs. His first job was delivering the St. Paul Pioneer Press by hand, a real ole fashioned paperboy! He joined the Boy Scouts and the Army Reserves (thru the Armory) in St. Paul. At age 18, he reported for duty to serve in WWII, but due to his asthma, the Lord had other plans for him. He began working at a garage, Rihm Motors on University Avenue. In those days, he used a hammer to check the fleet truck tires. A few years later, he enrolled in the Christian Brothers Order of St. Paul, was given the name Thomas; however, due to his eczema, he was advised by his superior that this was a sign that he was being called to pursue a different path to seek the Lord's purpose for his life.

In 1949, he earned a certificate in "Auto" at Dunwoody Institute in Minneapolis. Soon after, he met Marion, at the Prom Ballroom. They were married on October 24, 1953, at St. Francis Catholic Church; the reception was held at Sokol Hall in St. Paul. He cherished his wife in a dedicated and fun-loving relationship. They had 5 daughters, and put them through Catholic Schools because Gene felt passionate about teaching them about the Lord. He enjoyed running errands with his daughters, and chatting about Jesus' love along the way. His daughters participated in his hobbies including gardening, rock polishing, wine making (pear and grape), and splitting wood for our wood burning stove. When they were old enough, he taught each one of them how to drive using a stick shift, which at times, was very challenging for both! His favorite past times were trips to the local library, fixing cars, wood working (stilts for the whole neighborhood), sandbox, doll house, and a beautiful hand-

painted frame for Marion's prize ribbons from the Minnesota State Fair. Gene was curious and industrious, always willing to look something up to start a new project. He was a master of checklists and had a highly esteemed reputation as a Mr. Fixit. At various points in his life, he also took a couple of classes at St. Paul Technical Vocational Institute. He worked at Allied Aviation Fueling Company, near the International Airport, as a mechanic. He also worked at The Spring Company, Arden Hills, in Maintenance as the "Jack-of-all-Trades."

Upon retirement, he had the well-deserved time to enjoy grandchildren and traveling. He spent time with them in Minnesota and Arizona: sleepovers, wrestling, giving rides in the wheelbarrow, building a playhouse, woodworking (Easter baskets, baby doll cradles, step stools, jigsaw puzzles, birdhouses, bookshelves, etc.), playing chess, cribbage, and much more. His grandchildren loved him dearly; some of them called him "Papa Gene" when they were little. "Grandpa Gene" also taught his grandkids about God and prayer.

After Marion had passed away in 1996, he moved to Finlayson in 1999, and spent 15 years on his hobby farm. Living in the country was a brand new chapter of his life! He started fishing with family and friends, bee keeping, and raising chickens. In no time flat, he got involved in the area Catholic Churches and their community. On his 80th birthday, we invited a few friends and asked them to spread the word. Lo and behold, 40 people showed up! Obviously, once again, the Lord had him in the right place!!!

In 2015, Gene's low vision prompted him to transition from the hobby farm to senior housing in the twin cities. Riding the activity bus to pick up groceries, a 6 pack of Budweiser, and dining out was a novel and social experience. The adoration chapel, daily Mass, and the rosary group were the three pillars of his life there. Immersing himself in these ways, naturally allowed God's love to flow through him to his visitors. Gene had particular impact on one visitor, so much that he came to know the Lord, and started a prayer life. This gentleman

endearingly referred to Gene as "Papa Gene," a father figure to him. Gene was obviously a spiritual role model to one, and to many.

Gene was a very active member of his church in the following ways: attended daily mass and recited the rosary; Christian Leader via Cursillo Retreat; consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary (1993); Treasurer- Knights of Columbus (Sandstone 2000); Member of the Legion of Mary; Pro-Life activist protesting silently every week in Duluth for about 15 years; subscriber to the Wanderer Newspaper; and adored Jesus thru novenas, in various chapels, regularly for many years.

Years passed, and eventually Gene's overall health weakened. The need to care for him increased. He was extremely grateful to his family and next-door neighbor who helped. These last couple of months, Gene was in hospice that provided him comfort and delight, especially the group of singers and the cuddly therapy dog. Thank you to the North Memorial Hospice Care Team. He was at peace and trusted the Lord's timing. He will be forever in our hearts. He was extremely hard working, resourceful, loving, patient, and kind. He was a devoted husband, father, uncle, grandfather, and friend. He took time to build relationships; help resolve problems; encourage others to stay calm; suggest to pray, trust in the Lord, and "Lean on Mary;" accept situations; learn from mistakes; always have a "Plan B"; to do the right thing, especially when it's hard. His character and devotion to family provided a stable, loving home they all needed to thrive. His laughter, love, and selflessness were recognized by everyone who knew him.

Visitation: Tuesday, July 12, 2022 from 4- 8:00pm

Washburn -McReavy Coon Rapids Chapel

1827 Coon Rapids Blvd NW

Coon Rapids, MN 55433

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to the charity closest to his heart, Food for the Poor.

Celebration of Life
The Church of the Epiphany
1900-111th Ave NW
Coon Rapids, MN 55433.
Wednesday, July 13, 2022

Visitation 9:30-10:30
Memorial Mass 10:30-11:30
Luncheon 11:30-12:30

Interment to follow:
Resurrection Catholic Cemetery
2101 Lexington Avenue South
Mendota Heights, MN 55120

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 12. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Coon Rapids Chapel
1827 Coon Rapids Blvd.
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

Visitation

JUL 13. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

Church of the Epiphany (Coon Rapids)
11001 Hanson Boulevard Northwest
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

Church Service

JUL 13. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

Church of the Epiphany (Coon Rapids)
11001 Hanson Boulevard Northwest
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

Graveside Service

JUL 13. 1:30 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Resurrection Cemetery (Mendota Heights)
2101 Lexington Avenue South
Mendota Heights, MN 55120-1211

Tribute Wall

#A

“ #1 Daughter Of Gene’ 5...❤️ & Miss Always
lit a candle in memory of Robert Eugene
Wethern



#1 Daughter of Gene’ 5...🙏 & Miss always - July 31, 2022 at 01:23 PM

JW

“ Uncle Gene was a beautiful example of a true man. When I was first driving in my teens Gene helped me learn about cars and fix them by going to the junkyard. Both Gene and Uncle Dave helped me fix my car on the road right where it broke down. Gene came out to help me with the Impala one night around midnight. We couldn’t get it going so he gave me a ride home and we fixed it the next day. That’s the kind of person and Uncle he was. What a super Catholic and human being ! Love you Uncle Gene.

John Wethern - July 14, 2022 at 06:26 PM



“ Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the
family of Robert Eugene Wethern.



July 12, 2022 at 01:48 AM