



## Kenneth Lee Bruce

February 21, 1931 - December 10, 2025

Kenneth Lee Bruce, passed away after a short illness, at the age of 94 on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, with his daughters and son-in-laws at his bedside. He was born in Aldrich, Missouri on February 21, 1931 to Ruel E. Bruce and Irene (DeGraffenreid) Bruce. At age 12 he was saved during a revival at Campbell Grove Missionary Baptist Church, then baptized in Blue Hole. Ken was a member since 1964 at Pleasant View Missionary Baptist Church at Burns, Missouri. Ken attended Oak Grove School #70. Growing up he worked hard as a farm boy in Aldrich, Missouri, graduating from Bolivar High School in 1949. He attended junior college in Ventura, California. Ken served his country faithfully in the Korean War as a Staff Sergeant in the United States Air Force as a surveyor for remote air strips.

His work history started early as he and his brothers labored on their farm, as well as the neighboring farms. As a teen, he worked as a surveyor for the newly formed Rural Electric Cooperative (REA). The group is credited with bringing electricity for the first time to rural areas around SW Missouri. After returning from Korea, he worked for a few years for Shell Oil Company in California, first as a roughneck, then surveyor and drafter. In 1960 he bought the iconic Penguin Drive-In in Bolivar, Missouri, which he owned and operated for five years. The family still receives calls regarding the Penguin, as many a teenager had their first job, romance or after hours drag race plans. Later he operated the concessions at the Bolivar Speedway. The young workers who were privileged to work with Ken were given a wonderful example of a kind

and Christian boss. He worked as a sales representative for the Candy and Tobacco company, Ozark Food Company, and finally Lady Baltimore for 31 years. After being bored with retirement, he worked with I66 Auto Auction and enjoyed a whole new set of friends.

He loved his Missouri Fox Trotter Horses. He always rode a good horse and straightened out many a friend's horse, as well. He was the Bolivar Saddle Club President for many years.

Whatever he was involved in was well thought out - and always done with care.

As a quiet, caring father, he loved his two daughters and all the Grand and Great Grand Kids, who loved him dearly.

Proceeding him in death were his parents; brother, Charles Eugene Bruce; sister, Evelyn Sue Camp. He is survived by two daughters, Lucinda (Robert) Friend, and Beth (Eddie) Lollar; brother, George Bruce, and sister, Mary Bruce. He has seven grandchildren: Jacob (Karen) Thirion, Jason (Kaylee) Friend, Lindsey (Bret) Lovekamp, Preston (Krista) Friend, Katie (Casey) Martin, Clayton (Kelsey) Friend, and Julie (Aaron) Evans. He was blessed to have 17 Great Grand Children: Logan, Gavin, Carli, Braden, Aubrey, Brock, Ella, Wyatt, Brody, Jackson, Luke, Blakely, Evie, Colby, Eli, Sage, and Shiloh. In his words, he is leaving behind a sweet and elegant lady, Deanna Forgey, who was his best friend and companion of 34 years. He will be greatly missed, but we rejoice as our hopes rest in Christ and we'll join him one day, while riding his horse over the hill.

Services for Kenneth will be held 11:00 AM Monday, December 15, 2025 at the Butler Funeral Home. A visitation will be held one hour prior to the funeral from 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM. Burial will take place in the Greenwood Cemetery, in Bolivar, MO.

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

DEC 15. 11:00 AM (CT)

Butler Funeral Home - Bolivar  
407 E. Broadway  
Bolivar, MO 65613  
(417) 326-5233  
<https://butlerfuneralhome.com/>

## Graveside

DEC 15 (CT)

Greenwood Cemetery  
S. Dunnegan Ave.  
Bolivar, MO 65613

# Tribute Wall

BH

“ *What a good man I got to know him when we worked at Lady Baltimore Foods . I also rode some horses for him , Always had a smile and had time to talk horses , They don't make them like that anymore .*

**Brett Hinds** - December 17, 2025 at 10:30 AM

PB

“ *Paul, Becky and Brendan purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Kenneth Lee Bruce.*



**Paul, Becky and Brendan** - December 12, 2025 at 08:30 PM

PB

“ *Paul, Becky and Brendan planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Kenneth Lee Bruce.*

**Paul, Becky and Brendan** - December 12, 2025 at 08:30 PM

LW

“ *Lisa, Austin, Tyler & Kindall Wood purchased the Days of Sunshine Bouquet for the family of Kenneth Lee Bruce.*



**Lisa, Austin, Tyler & Kindall Wood** - December 12, 2025 at 07:33 PM

LW

“ Lisa, Austin, Tyler & Kindall Wood planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Kenneth Lee Bruce.

Lisa, Austin, Tyler & Kindall Wood - December 12, 2025 at 07:33 PM

RB

“ Sorry to hear of Ken's passing a very good guy, used to work for him at the Bolivar Race Track, selling drinks and the popping the most Popcorn ever. Very Good Man R.B.

RONALD BRUCE - December 12, 2025 at 07:26 PM

FF

“ FedEx Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spa thiphyllum for the family of Kenneth Lee Bruce.



FedEx Family - December 12, 2025 at 12:08 PM

FF

“ FedEx Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Kenneth Lee Bruce.

FedEx Family - December 12, 2025 at 12:08 PM

JA

“ I was so sorry to hear of Ken's passing. I had known him virtually all of my life. He was always so kind and friendly to me and my family. Please know your family will be in my thoughts and prayers.

Jerald Andrews - December 12, 2025 at 11:14 AM