



## Weldon Wayne Hegle

August 29, 1930 - February 14, 2022

Weldon Wayne Hegle, long-time Bolivar businessman, died the early morning of St. Valentine's Day, February 14, 2022, at Citizens Memorial Healthcare Facility. He was 91.

Weldon was born on a farm outside of Lost Springs, KS. Aug. 29, 1930, as the third child of William and Edith Hegle. He completed grade school and high school at Lost Springs and a year and a half of college at LeMars, Iowa.

Weldon met the girl of his dreams, Nola Wendt, in Herington, KS on Feb. 3, 1950. He often said he knew at first sight that she was the one for him. They married on the following New Year's Eve and they never parted until her death in 2018.

Three children were born to that union, Steven Wayne, Gary Lynn and Deborah Jean.

Weldon and Nola stayed on the farm four years and then moved first to Lawrence, KS, then to Kansas City and Marshall before finally settling in Bolivar in 1962, where Weldon became the manager of the Russell Newport's Ben Franklin Store.

They bought that business in 1974, renamed it Hegle's Variety, and added the Bolivar Department Store. They operated both stores for about five years.

They then started Hegle's Woodworks. They traveled the United States together setting up shows and selling souvenirs to retailers and theme parks.

They sold to businesses in all 50 states and as many as 12 other countries.

Individuals and businesses throughout this area crafted many of the novelty

items they bought and then sold.

They retired in 2012 after 50 years of business in Bolivar.

Weldon served as president of the Bolivar Area Chamber of Commerce for two years and was instrumental in keeping Teters' Floral Products in Bolivar. He led fundraising that prevented its relocation to Springfield. He also was instrumental among those who worked to get Bolivar Nursing Home built, which is now Citizens Memorial Healthcare Facility, his residence for his last four years and three months.

He was a long-time member of Open Hearts United Methodist Church of Bolivar, where he sang in the choir and was chairman of the finance committee and the board of trustees.

He also was a Mason, a Shriner and president of the Sixth Man Club at Southwest Baptist University for seven years.

His favorite pastime was fishing. He went with buddies on 44 fishing excursions to Canada and he won several tournaments. He competed in the Missouri and U.S. Open fishing tournaments.

During one outing on Lake Stockton in April 1980, he and two buddies saved the lives of another fishing party, which included three young girls. A boat capsized during a storm that had ruined what began as a beautiful day. After he and his buddies had arrived safely back to shore, they were told about the capsized boat. They went back out to perform the rescue despite lightning, hail, high wind and high waves.

Thirty years later, during one of his morning coffee gatherings at Brenda's Café, where for many years he carefully chronicled results of "the coffee game" which determined who paid for the coffee and tip each day, Weldon noted the anniversary of that rescue. He then wondered out loud about whatever had become of those girls. Work immediately began toward finding them and organizing a reunion that took place at his house, which then led to follow up visits.

Besides his parents, Weldon was preceded in death by his son, Steven; wife, Nola; brother, Paul; sisters Lola Schroeder of Topeka, KS and Arlene Straub of

Lenexa, KS, and grandson Brandon.

Survivors include his son and daughter-in-law Gary and Veva Hegle of Bolivar; daughter Deborah Vaughn of Joplin; six grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

Visitation will be held 10:00 AM Monday February 21, 2022 with funeral services at 11:00 AM at Butler Funeral Home Chapel in Bolivar. Burial is in Greenwood Cemetery, Bolivar.

Memorial donations are recommended to Open Hearts United Methodist Church of Bolivar, Southwest Baptist University's women's and/or men's basketball programs, or a charity of the donor's choice.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Weldon Wayne Hegle*

October 05, 2023 at 05:18 AM



“ *Weldon Wayne Hegle*

January 26, 2023 at 04:15 PM



“ *Gary, I was sorry to hear about your Dad passing away. He was always so cordial and kind to me. I told someone a couple of days ago, that he taught me how to dress when i had gotten out of the service and was attending college. I can't imagine all the kids he made happy during the holiday season with the large Christmas tree in the front room of your home. Please know that you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers.*

*Jerald Andrews*

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**gerald andrews** - February 17, 2022 at 11:29 AM



“ *I will miss my daily hugs for Weldon. It was a pleasure to have known him this past year. He will be missed at CMHCF.*

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**Mel** - February 15, 2022 at 09:48 PM