

AREA NEWS

GARY SECHRIST



financial Services before Gary and June purchased the Hays Answering Service in 1976. He later added "airport retiree" to his résumé—though anyone who knew Gary understood he never truly retired from anything except maybe sitting still.

If there was a ball to throw, a race to run, or a game to win, Gary was there. In his younger days, he excelled in football, basketball, and baseball. As an adult, he continued playing men's softball and basketball and dominated senior games events like the softball throw for distance and accuracy and the 100-meter dash. He competed until age 85, proving that age is just a number, especially if you are determined to beat every-one younger than you.

Gary loved fishing and motorcycling—sometimes at the same time, or at least close enough. He and June spent many happy miles exploring the United States on their motorcycle, enjoying the scenery and, undoubtedly, stopping often so Gary could tell someone about his latest medal or biggest fish.

He also gave back generously, volunteering as a baseball coach for his sons, serving as a Boy Scout leader, and supporting church activities for youth and seniors alike. If you needed encouragement, advice, or someone to keep score, Gary was your man. Gary won the Sensational Sunflower Award from the North Central Flint Hills Area Agency for Aging for his volunteer services in Ottawa County, KS, in 2024.

Gary was preceded in death by his parents, Otto and Rosina Sechrist; his stepfather, Guy "Jack" Ayers; his sister, Marva Gene; his brothers, Gerald and Curly Sechrist; and his nieces, Sue Powell, Melonie Browder, Melissa Browder, and nephews, Danny Thomas and Jimmy

Browder. He was also preceded in death by many beloved sisters and brothers-in-law, who are likely bracing themselves for his arrival—and a friendly competition or two.

Gary leaves behind his devoted wife, June; his children, Gary (Barb) Sechrist, Gregory (Melea) Sechrist, and Serina (Mark) Hamann; as well as seven grandchildren, Todd, Kevin (Taylor), Bethany (Jason), Ian (Amber), Robert (Amy), Derrick (Lexi), and Lindsay (Bailey), and twelve great-grandchildren, all of whom he loved dearly. Nothing made him smile brighter than having a grandbaby on his lap. He is also survived by his sisters, Melba Clanton and Sandra (George) Powell, sister-in-law Donna Newman, and many nieces and nephews whom he loved as his own.

The family will forever be grateful to the staff at Oak View for the exemplary care Gary received during his short stay.

The family received friends from 5:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M., Friday, February 27, at Wilson Family Funeral Home, 405 Argyle Ave., Minneapolis, KS 67467. Funeral services was at 10:00 A.M., Saturday, February 28, at the Antioch Baptist Church, Ada. Burial with military honors will be in Fairview Cemetery, Ada. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorials to Ada Antioch Baptist Church or the Salina Rescue Mission. Gary would also accept you winning something in his honor—though he would probably still want to see the scorecard.

(First published in The Minneapolis Messenger on February 26, 2026)

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS

In the Matter of the Estate of Marilyn Sorenson

Case No. OT-2024-PR-000029

NOTICE OF HEARING

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:

You are notified a Petition has been filed in this Court by Jason Thayer, duty appointed, qualified and acting Administrator of the Estate of Marilyn Sorenson, deceased, request-ing that Petitioner's acts be approved; account be settled and allowed; the heirs be determined; the Estate be assigned to the persons entitled to it pursuant to the laws of intestate succession; fees and expenses be allowed; costs be determined and ordered paid; the administration of the Estate be closed; the Administrator be discharged and Petitioner be released from further liability.

You are required to file your written defenses to the Petition on or before March 31, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in the District Court, Minneapolis, Ottawa County, Kansas at which time and place the cause will be heard. Should you fail to file your written defenses, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon the Petition.

/s/ Jason Thayer
Administrator

Respectfully Submitted,

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By: /s/ Kathryn Carter
Kathryn Carter, #12969
Attorney for Petitioner

JAMES VALCOURSE



James Neal Valcourse, 89, of Salina, passed away February 19, 2026.

He was born on May 17, 1936, in Aurora, Kansas, to Neal E. and Beatrice P. (Goyette) Valcourse. He married Clara Jane Stephenson on September 8, 1962, at St. Peter's Church in Aurora. He graduated from Aurora High School in 1954 and attended Creighton University. Following college, he joined the Marines. After 2 years of service, he entered the workforce. He worked for Kriz Davis for more than 30 years and retired in 1995. He volunteered at the Catholic Diocese and was an avid booster of Sacred heart High school and Kansas Wesleyan.

Left to mourn his passing are his sons, Greg Valcourse (Tracy), and Mike Valcourse (Theresa); daughter Chelle Fleming (Dave);

eight grandchildren; two step-grandchildren; ten great-grandchildren; six great-step-grandchildren; brothers Bill Valcourse (Lisa), John Valcourse; sister Ruth Reynolds; sister-in-law Mary Beth, brother-in-law Bill Stephenson (Gloria) and numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins.

He is preceded in death by his parents, brother, Paul Valcourse, brother-in-law Duane Reynolds, and sister-in-law Judy Valcourse.

Visitation with the family was from 4-8 p.m. with a vigil at 7 p.m., Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at Ryan Mortuary. A Mass of Christian burial was held at 10 a.m., Wednesday, February 25, 2026, at St. Mary Queen of the Universe Catholic Church, with co-celebrants, Fr. Kevin Weber. Inurnment was at All Saints Catholic Cemetery, followed by a luncheon for all attendees.

Memorials may be made to Ottawa County Health Center Long Term Care of Minneapolis, Kansas, St. Mary's Catholic Church, or Immaculate Conception in Minneapolis, Kansas, in care of Ryan Mortuary, 137 N. 8th St., Salina, KS 67401.

Ada News

On Tuesday, February 17, Brayden Gebhart was recognized at the basketball game and assisted the team during their game at Tescott. It was a big night for Brayden.

On Saturday, February 21, George Powell celebrated his 90th birthday with family and friends at the Ada Community Building. More than 100 attended. George's actual birthday was on Sunday February 22. Following the celebration, several traveled to Concordia to enjoy fried chicken at the American Legion.

Early Wednesday morning, February 25, the Ada Fire Department responded to a fire near the Ottawa County Lake, along with several other fire departments. The fire was very destructive, so assistance from the

surrounding fire departments was appreciated.

Breakfasts will begin taking place at the Ada Community Building on Saturdays, beginning March 7, 8:00-11:00, March and April. Good food and conversation.

CORRECTION: Casey Seyfert, son-in-law of Sara and Rob Thompson, is the school superintendent at Beloit - not Corey Seyfert, as reported last week.

Daylight Savings Time will begin on Sunday, March 8. Don't forget to change your clocks.

Next week, we may see some chilly weather, as well as rain. Official spring will be coming soon.

If you would like to submit Ada News, please send it to adanews2022@gmail.com.

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