

LOCAL NEWS

Obituaries

ROBERT JOSEPH SCHRICK

Robert Joseph Schrick, 88, of Topeka, KS formally of Nortonville, Kansas passed away Sunday March 23, 2025.

Mass will be held at 11:00 AM, Saturday, April 5, 2025, at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Nortonville, KS, with Fr. William Dun-Dery officiating the service. A rosary will be recited at 9:30 AM, the day of the Mass, with visitation from 10:00 AM until the time of the service. Burial will follow at the St. Joseph Cemetery. Memorials are suggested to St. Matthews Catholic Church, Topeka, KS, or to St. Joseph Catholic Church, Nortonville, KS. Condolences for the family may be left online at www.beckerdyer.com



JOHN B. KANE, JR.

John B. Kane, Jr., 93, Atchison, Kansas, died Saturday, March 22, 2025, at Atchison Medicalodge surrounded by his loving family.

Mass of Christian Burial was March 26, 2025, at 11:00 A.M. at St. Joseph Church with Fr. Meinrad Miller, OSB. Interment at Mt. Calvary Cemetery. Memorial contributions are suggested to the American Legion New Building Fund or Medicalodge Activity Fund and may be left in the care of the funeral home.



John was born August 8, 1931, in Atchison, Kansas, the son of John B., Sr. and Florence (Byrne) Kane. He attended St. Patrick Elementary and Atchison County Community Schools. Due to unforeseen hardships, John did not graduate high school, but through hard work and determination, he earned his GED at the age of 40.

John served in the United States Army from October 14, 1952, until his honorable discharge in October 1960, having attained the rank of CPL.

On August 26, 1957, at St. Joseph’s Church, John would marry the love of his life, Beulah Fitzpatrick. They were married 66 years before Beulah preceded him in death on January 27, 2024.

After serving in the Army, John went to work for Page Airways for 15 years. He then went on to work for Kansas Gas Service for 22 years, until his retirement. Following his time at Kansas Gas, he was employed with Arensberg-Pruett Funeral Home, driving for services and assisting in any role that he could to serve others.

John was a 60+ year member of the American Legion Post No. 6, holding all offices except for Commander. In his time with the American Legion, he presented over 350 American flags to families of deceased veterans. John was a lifetime member of the VFW Post #1175. He delivered Meal on Wheels for 10 years and drove patients for the American Cancer Society’s “Road to Recovery” Program. John was also a member of the Knights of Columbus and Westar Energy Retirees Club. John loved telling stories and typically had a good joke. He had a knack for being able to remember facts about people or help to fill in a family tree.

Survivors include three sons, Richard “Archie” (Betty) Kane, Atchison, KS, Eddie (Cindy) Kane, Eudora, KS, Brian (Tracy) Kane, Atchison, KS, a daughter Rose (Tim) Trower, Atchison, KS, a brother, Eugene Kane, Atchison, KS, twelve grandchildren, seventeen great-grandchildren, with one on the way, a great-great-grandchild, and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Beulah, two brothers, Elvin “Skip” Kane, and Donald “Bud” Kane, and five sisters, Lorene Clemens, Mary Lou Andre, Margie Swenson, Pat Rush, and Doris Blankenship.

The family would like to extend a special thanks to the staff and residents of Atchison Medicalodges for all their care and support for John during these last two years.

JOHNNY B. RALSTON

Johnny B. Ralston, 69, Atchison, Kansas died Wednesday, March 19, 2025.

Funeral service will be on Wednesday, April 2, 2025, at 12:00 Noon at the Arensberg-Pruett Funeral Home. A visitation will be Wednesday, beginning at 11:00 A.M. prior to the service at the funeral home. Burial in Leavenworth National Cemetery.

Survivors include his wife Patricia “Patty” Ralston, Atchison, KS; two sons, Joshua (Jessica J.) Ralston, William (Brenna) Ralston; a daughter, Jessica A. Ralston; three brothers, two sisters, and two grandchildren.

His complete obituary may be read at www.arenbergpruett.com.



MARY ELLEN TROWER

Mary Ellen Trower, 79, of Atchison, Kansas, passed away Monday, March 24, 2025, at Amberwell Hospital.

Funeral Services will be held at 2:00 pm on Thursday, March 27, 2025, at the First Baptist Church, Atchison, Kansas with Pastor Russ Copper officiating. Burial will follow at Summer Cemetery. A visitation will be held one hour prior to the service at the church. Memorials are suggested to First Baptist Church and can be sent to the care of Becker-Dyer-Stanton Funeral Home. Condolences for the family can be left online at www.beckerdyer.com.



Mary was born on October 18, 1945, in Neosho Falls, Kansas, the daughter of Joseph and Ann (Cole) Guatney. She was married to John V. Trower, Jr., on July 1, 1963, in Manhattan, Kansas. He preceded her in death on September 19, 2023.

Mary was an active member of the First Baptist Church. She was a part of Senior Adult Learning Together (SALT), on the mission board and the bible study group. Mary enjoyed crocheting, knitting, computer research, family history, and genealogy.

Mary is survived by son Travis Trower, Atchison, KS, daughter Sonja Betts, Kansas City, KS, brother, Joe Guatney, Topeka, KS, sisters Linda Williams, MO, and Susan McCoole, Atchison, KS, eight grandchildren, one great-grandchild, and numerous nieces and nephews. Mary is preceded by both parents, husband, son, Vernon Trower, brothers Charles and Richard Guatney, and sisters Betty Smith and Sally Guatney.

NEIL EDDIE CAUDLE

Neil Eddie Caudle, 55, passed away on Wednesday, March 19, 2025, on the farm in Bendena, KS.

Neil was born November 17, 1969, to Roger and Donna (Ricklefs) Caudle in St. Joseph, Missouri. He was a lifelong resident of Bendena, KS. He grew up on the same farm where he raised his family in later years. He loved working the land and raising cattle. He attended Midway Denton High School, was an integral part of four state-champion football teams, and graduated in May of 1988.

After high school, he attended Kansas State University where he was a member of the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity, completing his degree in Agronomy in December 1992.



It was at Kansas State where he met his wife, Mlle Brocaw. They married on July 10, 1993. They then moved to the Caudle Family farm where he took over operations and raised their family. He also served as Ag Rep and Director for the Bendena State Bank.

Neil’s great love for Jesus gave him hope each day and got him through many tough years, especially throughout his 20-year battle with brain cancer. He was a lifelong member of the Troy Christian Church where he served as an elder.

Neil’s greatest joys in life were spending time with his wife, children and new grandchildren, attending coffee club and working on the farm alongside his son, Brandon and his trusted hired hand, Dan Earl. He loved K-State games and wearing purple. Neil was loved by many for his God-fearing, generous, kind hearted personality, and infectious smile. He will be deeply missed.

Neil was preceded in death by his paternal and maternal grandparents and an infant brother (Brian).

He leaves behind his wife Mlle; three children, BreAnne (Jarrett) Pitman, Brandon (Chelsea) Caudle, and Calli (Alec) Richie; grandchildren Beckett Pitman, Nora Caudle, Drake Richie, and baby Baylor Richie due in April; parents Roger and Donna; and two brothers, Jeff (Tracie), and Todd (Kamille) and numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews.

A funeral service will be held on Wednesday, March 26, 2025 at 10:00 A.M. at the Troy Christian Church in Troy, KS. Graveside service will follow at Moray Cemetery. Visitation with the family will be Tuesday, March 25, 2025 from 5:00 - 7:00 P.M at the church.

THOMAS JOHN ERNZEN

Thomas John Ernzen, 89, of Waco, TX, passed away peacefully on Sunday, March 9, 2025, in Corpus Christi, TX where he had been living with family.

Tom was born October 10, 1935, the fourth child and middle son of 8 born to Frances Domann Ernzen and Felix Ernzen. He resided in Atchison County Kansas until 1968 when he married Janice Lee Turner at Sacred Heart Church in Leavenworth. It was a match made in heaven and they were happily married for 52 years until her death in 2020. They lived in Leavenworth and in 1982 moved to Waco, TX but he remained a Kansan at heart. Family was very important to him, and both he and Jan were very proud of their two sons, Brian and Brandon.



Tom graduated in 1953 from Atchison County Community High School where he was very active in school. He was elected class president for 2 years, was in the school play, participated in sports, and belonged to several clubs. His favorite subject was shop class.

After graduation, he continued working on the farm where his brother Ron said he was the “go-to person” to repair the farm equipment as he had an innate, uncanny ability to fix all things mechanical he was “Mr. Fix It” from early on. He learned about farming, raising cattle and hogs, and operating construction equipment as a young man. All of these skills served him well later in life. When his father died in 1957, he and brothers Dan and Ron formed the Ernzen Farms partnership that continued until he seized the opportunity to fulfill a lifelong dream of seeing the world, and that he did!

In 1972, Tom was employed by Slurry Seal, Inc. in Waco as an equipment designer. His strong work ethic, attention to detail, knowledge of mechanics, and the operation of heavy construction equipment all learned on the farm made him the success he was. His first assignment was in Kuwait in 1972, and before he retired in 2003, he had traveled to over 45 countries in Asia (mainly the Middle East and China), Europe, and North and South America primarily starting up emulsion plants and commissioning road-paving equipment. He was instrumental in the paving of the “Highway of Death” between Kuwait City and Basra, Iraq that was later used by Iraqi armored divisions for the 1990 invasion of Kuwait and later by the U.S. and British in the Gulf War. Slurry Seal, Inc. was sold several times and ultimately became part of AkzoNobel, a large multinational company. At his 25th year of service award presentation, he was recognized for having never taken a sick day in 25 years. While employed by AkzoNobel, he was one of 7 employees who were granted two U.S. patents in 2000 and 2001 for inventions related to “petroleum hydrocarbon in water colloidal dispersion”. After his retirement, he continued in a consulting role.

Tom never lost his love of farming and retired on the small farm they owned in Texas where he raised cattle, had a hay field, and stayed busy working his mechanical magic on anything needing repair and also inventing and machining equipment parts. He was an excellent storyteller and on trips he made to Kansas to attend family functions he often told of the experiences he had overseas to a rapt audience. He also made trips to Kansas to visit his farming operations in both Atchison and Leavenworth counties.

Tom was a strong proponent of soil conservation and received a “Soil Conservation Award” for work he had done on his land. Another achievement he was very proud of was making a solo flight in a Piper Colt. His other interests included stock investing, politics, and following world news. Also from his teenage years on, he loved to fast dance to Rock and Roll and he was a showstopper!

He was a devout, lifelong Catholic who attended mass regularly and whose faith was very important to him. He had a special place in his heart for the little country church of St. Patrick’s which was his home parish growing up, as well as for the people of the parish and of the community at large where he continued to maintain friendships. He was a Knights of Columbus member for over 70 years.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife Jan who was the love of his life, and his siblings Dan Ernzen, Dr. Marie Landwer, Ron Ernzen, and Rita Schuler.

He is survived by his two sons and their wives, Brian and Julie Ernzen of Waco, and Brandon and Nicole Ernzen of Corpus Christi, six grandchildren, Emma, Madison, Benjamin, Joshua, Mathias, and Aurora, and siblings Dorothy McDermid and Patsy Penning of Atchison, and Shirley Ernzen of Olathe.

Mass of Christian Burial will be Saturday, March 29, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at St. Patrick’s Church in Atchison, KS. Interment will follow in the St. Patrick’s Church Cemetery. Visitation will be at 10:00 followed by a parish rosary at 10:45 prior to the funeral mass.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to Driscoll Children’s Hospital in Corpus Christi, TX, or St. Patrick’s Cemetery, and may be left in the care of Arensberg Pruett Funeral Home.

NOTICE

The annual meeting of the Doniphan Cemetery Board will be held at 6pm, April 7th at Terry Heineken’s home, 203 Mineral Point Rd., in Atchison, KS. Public is welcome.

The board is also requesting bids for mowing, trimming and trash removal.

Send bids to Terry Heineken, 203 Mineral Point Rd., Atchison, KS. 66002

For more information call 1-785-985-2572.

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