

# Obituary

## Dr. John Drew Atkin III, M.D.



With deepest reverence, we gather to remember and celebrate the remarkable life of Dr. John Drew Atkin III, M.D. — beloved physician, devoted husband, father, mentor, neighbor, and friend. On July 14, 2025, at the age of ninety, Dr. Atkin slipped the surly bonds of earth, held close by the family whose love he nurtured so fiercely and who loved him in equal measure. In that gentle parting, he leaves behind a legacy of quiet strength, steadfast service, and a compassion so wide it will carry forward through every life he touched.

Dr. Atkin was preceded in death by his father, John Melvin Atkin; his mother, Margaret (Shaffer) Atkin; his sister, Kay (Atkin) Bias; and his brother, Jay Melvin Atkin.

Born on March 31, 1935, in Arkansas City, Kansas, John Drew Atkin III was raised on the family farm nestled deep within the tall-grass prairie on the Osage Reservation near Grainola, Oklahoma — a land of open skies and whispering grasses that shaped in him an unshakable sense of duty, quiet resilience, and a faith rooted in the simple goodness of caring for others. He grew up with the wind at his back and the hush of the prairie under his feet, carrying forward the lessons of the earth and its people. He graduated from Shidler High School in 1953 and went on to Oklahoma A&M (now Oklahoma State University), where he earned his undergraduate

degree in zoology and proudly served as a member of the U.S. Air Force ROTC rifle team. He later completed his medical degree at the University of Oklahoma, becoming the first member of the Osage Tribe to graduate from medical school — a milestone honored by the tribe with the name Ni-Ka-Mo-Ko, “Medicine Man.”

In 1962, after serving in the Kansas Army National Guard and attaining the rank of Major, Dr. Atkin set out with a quiet but determined mission: to find a community that needed him most. He wrote letters to small towns across Kansas, weighing their needs against census records, listening for a place where his calling might take root. That search led him to Yates Center — a town whose spirit matched his own unwavering devotion. Here, he planted his life’s work firmly in the soil of this community, becoming not just its doctor, but its steady guardian, advocate, and friend for more than half a century.

A physician in the truest sense, Dr. Atkin gave himself wholly to the people in his care. Long before dawn broke, while most of the world still slept, he would slip down those quiet roads to visit his patients in distant hospitals — more than forty miles round trip each day. Upon returning to his clinic in Yates Center, he would begin tending to neighbors and strangers alike, and when the last patient left, he would gather his worn black bag and head back out under the stars — making house calls to those too frail or too burdened to reach him on their own. Often, it was well past dark when he finally crossed his own threshold, the ache of the day held lightly in his worn shoulders and humble heart. To so many, he was not just a doctor, but a witness to the unspoken struggles and small joys that knit a com-

munity together — a trusted healer, a quiet mercy, a reminder that even in the longest nights, compassion still lights the way.

His life’s devotion to healing stretched far beyond any single patient or place. Dr. Atkin served multiple terms as Chief of Staff for Allen County Hospital, guided the creation of the Family Medicine Residency Program at St. Joseph Hospital in Denver, and served as a preceptor for countless medical students and residents — nurturing each one to carry forward the same compassion and tireless devotion he gave his patients. He was instrumental in forming and directing Woodson County EMS, served as the Woodson County Coroner for most of his career, and remained medical director for area nursing homes even after retiring from active practice. Through each chapter of his career, he inspired generations of young people to follow in his footsteps, gently reminding them that true healing begins with humble service and a listening heart.

His faith and civic spirit were the quiet threads that bound his life’s work to this town he loved so well. Dr. Atkin was an elder of the First Presbyterian Church of Yates Center, a Shriner, and a devoted member of Gilead Lodge #144 A.F. & A.M. He served on the Board of SEK Mental Health and gave his time to the Woodson County and Coffey County Historical Societies — honoring the past even as he shaped the future. He was named Citizen of the Year by the Yates Center Lion’s Club in 1995, received the Cornerstone of the Community Award from the Woodson County Chamber of Commerce, and was recognized as Family Physician of the Year in 2008 by the Kansas Association of Family Physicians — each honor a

simple testament to the truth that those who serve quietly often leave the deepest mark.

Beyond his practice, Dr. Atkin understood that caring for a community meant tending to its heart as well as its people. When the historic Light Hardware building was condemned, he organized a community effort, pouring countless hours of his own time into its restoration — salvaging what others would have cast aside. In time, he gifted it back to the city, a living testament to his belief that true stewardship means leaving a place better than you found it. His life reminds us still that service happens not only in grand gestures but in small acts of hope, built one kindness at a time.

Yet of all the roles he carried in this life, the truest devotion he ever knew was the one he shared with his beloved wife, Patricia Ann (Purcell) Atkin. For nearly fifty years, they built a life rooted in faith, laughter, and the quiet promise to stand side by side through every season this world could bring. In those final years, as the body that had served so many at last grew frail beneath the unrelenting march of time, it was Patricia who stood as his fiercest protector and quiet light. She carried him through days that would have broken lesser souls — shouldering every burden without complaint, meeting each hardship with a grace that never wavered. In her arms, he found dignity, comfort, and the tender moments of peace that only

her steadfast love could give. Through her devotion, she kept her vow — in sickness and in health, to cherish and to keep — until his very last breath. And when his work here was done, it was her love that gently eased him home — reminding us all what true love demands, and how it can light the way when the night grows long.

Dr. Atkin is survived by Patricia, the heart of the family they built together.

He leaves behind his children Kelly (Dixon) Perkins and husband Greg — Chad and Matthew; Ange (Dixon) Hobbs and husband George — Bret, Kyle, Paige, Haley, Heather, and Mary Fay; Debbie (Dixon) Pistotnik and husband Brian — Kevin, Lauren, John Patrick, and Kyndal; John Atkin IV and wife Lesli — Rowdy; Sydney (Atkin) Courtney and husband Theo Felts — Cailie and Chaney; and Allison (Atkin) Thompson and husband Brad — Hunter and Logan; dozens of great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews; siblings-in-law, Sandi Atkin, Beverly Nittler, and Leslie Purcell; his beloved cats, Annie, Baby, Charlie; and his grand-dog: Dali, each of whom carries a spark of his love forward into a world he left better than he found it, for theirs is a family grounded in faith and gratitude, held close by the countless moments and memories that shaped their days. His presence was a blessing beyond measure — a quiet inheritance for those who understood that a love like his,

when kept close, is a gift that shapes every day that follows.

Dr. Atkin was a man who brought light to the darkest hours, a calm hand in life’s fiercest storms, and a quiet witness to the best that lives within us all. His spirit endures in the families he delivered into this world, in the Christmas lights that brightened the town square, and in the countless small mercies that stitched this community together, one gentle act at a time. He taught us that there is still worth in that which feels worn or broken — that with patient hands and an open heart, even the most fragile things can be made whole again. May we honor his memory by living as he did — with humble service, boundless compassion, and the quiet courage to love each other well, even when the road grows long.

A funeral service celebrating Dr. Atkin’s life and legacy was held at Town Hall, in Yates Center, at 11 a.m. Saturday, July 19, a luncheon followed in the Dr. John & Patricia Atkin Grand Ballroom at Light Hardware.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Dr. John D. Atkin III Memorial Fund, care of GN-Bank, Yates Center to be used for the betterment of our community.

May he rest peacefully — his work complete, his spirit soaring free, and the love he poured into this world lighting our way for generations yet to come.

## Public Notice

(Continued from Page 5)  
**TAX ID NO.: NB4539**

Legal Description: A tract of land starting at the Southwest corner of Block Nine (9), Yates Fifth Addition, thence East 120 feet, thence North 140 feet, thence West 120 feet, thence South 140 feet to place of beginning, all being portions of Lots Fifteen (15), Eighteen (18), Nineteen (19), and Twenty-two (22), in said Block Nine (9), Yates Fifth Addition, Yates Center, Kansas.

AND  
A tract of land beginning at the Southeast corner of Block Nine (9) Yates Fifth Addition to city of Yates Center, Kansas, running thence North 140 feet, thence West 60 feet, thence South 140 feet, thence East 60 feet to place of beginning; said tract of land being a portion of Lots 16, 17, 20 and 21, Block 9, Yates Fifth Addition to City of Yates Center, Kansas.

AND  
A tract of land beginning 120 feet East of the Southwest corner of Block Nine (9), Yates Fifth Addition running thence East 45 feet, thence North 140 feet, thence West 45 feet, thence South 140 feet to place of beginning, being a part of Lots Fifteen (15), Sixteen (16), Twenty-two (22), Nineteen (19), Eighteen (18), Twenty-one (21), Twenty (20), Seventeen (17), in said Block Nine (9), Yates 5th Addition, reserving unto Grantor a perpetual easement 10 feet wide to lay & maintain sewer, water & gas lines together with the right of ingress & egress, located 15 feet East of the West property line of said tract.

described above.  
AND  
A tract of land beginning 60 feet West of the Southeast corner of Block Nine (9), Yates Fifth Addition, running thence due North 140 feet, thence West 60 feet, thence South 140 feet, thence East 60 feet to the place of beginning, said tract of land being a portion of Lots Sixteen (16), Seventeen (17), Twenty (20) and Twenty-one (21), Block Nine (9), Yates Fifth Addition to the City of Yates Center, Woodson County, Kansas.

Approximate Location: 605 E HOLLOWAY, YATES CENTER, KS 66783

Delinquent Years: 2020-2024 Redemption Costs: \$2,986.43

Owners of Record: JOHN-STON, MASON W & LISA D

**PARCEL NUMBER: 66  
TAX ID NO.: NB45231**

Legal Description: Lots Two (2) and Three (3), Block Six (6), Yates Fifth Addition to the City of Yates Center, Kansas

Approximate Location: 500 E WILSON, YATES CENTER, KS 66783

Delinquent Years: 2019-2024 Redemption Costs: \$1,912.39

Owners of Record: KING, BROOKE A

**PARCEL NUMBER: 67  
TAX ID NO.: NB4465**

Legal Description: Lots Three (3), Four (4), Five (5) and Six (6), Block Four (4), Yates Fourth Addition to the City of Yates Center, Kansas

Approximate Location: 409 E WILSON, YATES CENTER, KS 66783 Delinquent Years: 2019-2024

Redemption Costs: \$13,409.64

Owners of Record: KING, CHARLES L & ANGELA

**PARCEL NUMBER: 68  
TAX ID NO.: NB4512**

Legal Description: Lots Two (2) and Three (3) less 25 Feet of the East end thereof, Block Three (3), Yates Fifth Addition to the City of Yates Center, Kansas

Approximate Location: 400 S HURT, YATES CENTER, KS 66783 Delinquent Years: 2019-2024

Redemption Costs: \$1,332.18

Owners of Record: LINEBAUGH, JAMES F

**PARCEL NUMBER: 69  
TAX ID NO.: YC4132**

Legal Description: The South 65 feet of Lot 15 and the South 65 feet of the East Half of Lot 14, all of Block 41, city of Yates Center, Kansas, original townsite, Woodson County, Kansas

Approximate Location: 109 S GREEN, YATES CENTER, KS 66783

Delinquent Years: 2018-2024 Redemption Costs: \$5,783.82

Owners of Record: MCK-INSEY, BILLY DEAN & TAMMY ANN

**PARCEL NUMBER: 70  
TAX ID NO.: TC3762**

Legal Description: Lot Three (3), Block Nine (9), Mann’s Addition, subject to M. O. Pacific Railroad Right-of-Way, City of Toronto, Woodson County, Kansas

Approximate Location: 207 N JEFFERSON, TORONTO, KS 66777

Delinquent Years: 2020-2024 Redemption Costs: \$1,054.48

Owners of Record: MEF-FORD, THERESA & DAVID R

# Club News

## 3-In-1 4-H

By Kyler Rinehart

The regular monthly meeting of the 3-In-1 4-H Club was called to order by president Tayla Baker Wednesday, June 11, at 6 p.m. at Still Water’s Edge Retreat.

Hadley Heffner and Timbir Grisier led the club in saying the Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H Pledge. Secretary Judah Stockebrand announced that the roll call was a summer chore that you are responsible for. It was answered by 12 members and two leaders. The minutes were approved as read.

Junior treasurer Hadley Heffner gave her report. Judah Stockebrand moved to accept the treasurer’s report as read. It was seconded and passed.

For the leader’s report, leader Cindy Baker said that Birdies and Bluegrass is this Saturday and told us that this is her last year as a 4-H leader.

Leader Betsy Peirpoint said that the fair entry deadline is Tuesday, July 1. Members who are serving at Birdies and Bluegrass can choose to wear their lime green 4-H shirts or the old one and should arrive by 4 p.m. to help serve at 5:30 p.m. The fair schedule is now out. Members need to wear a

white shirt to show animals and can wear whatever they wish for the rest of their judging events.

There was no unfinished or new business to come before the club.

For the program, each member present gave a project talk on their fair projects. Luke Zajak became a mem-

ber of the club in a new member ceremony.

T. Baker announced next month’s meeting agenda. C. Baker announced that the poultry rule changed so check the fair book.

Heffner moved to adjourn the meeting by saying the 4-H motto. It was seconded and passed.

## Your hopes. Their dreams.

I’m in the business of protecting your todays and their tomorrows. Let’s connect. You talk and I’ll listen – the way it should be.



Sharla Miller  
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109 N. State | Yates Center, KS  
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