



## Gerald L. Cunningham

September 17, 1929 - September 22, 2014

Gerald L. Cunningham, 85, of East Peoria, passed away at 5:37pm, Monday, September 22, 2014 in his home, surrounded by family.

Gerald was born September 17, 1929 in Peoria to Lloyd and Vida Bailey Cunningham. He shared 68 years of marriage with the love of his life, the former Marvalee Wilcox. They were married December 17, 1945 in Kansas City, MO; she preceded him in death in 2012.

Surviving are their two daughters, Sherry (Richard Vosberg) Becker of Peoria and Susan (Gregory) Derry of Cuba; three grandchildren, Cary (Karen) Becker of East Peoria, Kimberly (Mark) Watkins of Canton, and Jennifer Derry of Columbia, MO; eight great-grandchildren; three great-great grandchildren; two sisters, and one brother.

He was also preceded in death by his parents, 2 sisters, 1 brother, and a great-grandson, Ryan Petefish.

Gerald grew up in and attended school in Independence, MO, and returned to this area in the 1940s. He worked for Bower Buick until 1958, before working in claims at AllState Insurance. In 1966, he bought his first business, East Peoria Autobody, which is currently operated by his family, and later purchased three additional autobody shops. An active member and supporter of the community, Gerald served on the school board in Creve Coeur, was a city trustee, and sponsored many local youth sports teams. He was a member of Bethel Memorial Church, Frank N. Nicol Lodge #1170 AF & AM, Elks Lodge #20, and was a lifetime member of the Scottish Rite. In his later years, he

indulged his love of golf by owning and operating Wee-Ma-Tuk Country Club in Canton from 1980-1990, and at age 60, he earned his pilot's license and bought his first plane. He and Marvalee also spent time together traveling abroad extensively and enjoying Lakeland, FL, where they vacationed for 15 years. In life, Gerald was a very humble man from humble beginnings, who cherished his family and friends. He was one of a kind.

Visitation will be from 1:00-3:00pm on Saturday, September 27, 2014 at Deiters Funeral Home & Crematory in East Peoria. A tribute to Gerald's life will begin at 3:00pm following the visitation. Masonic rites will be conferred, and Pastor Paul Isom will officiate.

Memorial contributions may be made to Illinois Cancer Care Center or to the Ryan Petefish Trade School Memorial, c/o Mid-America National Bank in Canton.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP **27**. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Deiters Funeral Home - East Peoria  
444 E. Washington Street  
East Peoria, IL

## Celebration of Life

SEP **27**. 3:00 PM (CT)

Deiters Funeral Home & Crematory - East Peoria  
444 E. Washington Street  
East Peoria, IL 61611  
(309) 699-5999  
[garydeiters@deitersfuneralhome.com](mailto:garydeiters@deitersfuneralhome.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ *Deiters Funeral Home & Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Gerald L. Cunningham*



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**Deiters Funeral Home & Crematory** - September 29, 2014 at 03:16 PM

EG

“ *I will miss Jerry very much as a friend, great putter and excellent pitch player. It will not be the same without him. Betty and I send warm wishes to the family.*

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**Edward and Betty Georgieff** - September 29, 2014 at 01:37 PM

TB

“ *To all of Gerry's family.  
Gerry was a great part of Bower Buick. I should know, my name is Tom Bower. I can recall everybody started calling him "Allstate" when the word got around he was leaving.  
Warm wishes to all of you.  
Sincerest Regards,  
Tom Bower, Peoria*

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**tom bower** - September 29, 2014 at 08:52 AM

SB

“ We will miss Gerry's friendly smile and his wonderful comments. Get-togethers with him and Marvalee with the McCullough group leave us with fond memories. Thanks for being part of our lives - Stan & Maryann Bugaieski

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**Stan & Maryann Bugaieski** - September 28, 2014 at 02:31 PM

RH

“ Gerry will always be remembered as a gentle, loving person. His loving spirit is so strong, it will continue to be with all his family and friends. God's healing is touching upon all of you.



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**Ron and Kathy Hayes** - September 26, 2014 at 07:23 PM

SR

“ In memory of my good friend Gerry, he will be missed. Gerry was a true gentleman, as well as a friend to every one he met. I had the pleasure of knowing Gerry for the last 15 years. He touched my life.

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**Sharon Ruby** - September 26, 2014 at 11:00 AM

EF

“ Jerry I met you in 1950 This was not part of the plan But we shared a lot in those many years, will miss you guy.Love Ya All -Earl

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**Earl Fuller** - September 26, 2014 at 09:04 AM

ML

“ *Melba Lewis lit a candle in memory of Gerald L. Cunningham*



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**Melba Lewis** - September 26, 2014 at 05:34 AM

ML

“ *Our parents enjoyed a great friendship while here on earth. I hope they continue to enjoy that in heaven. He was a great man, always had a smile and willing to help you out. We shared many laughs with him. We are keeping his family in our thoughts and prayers. May God Bless him.*

*Nancey (France), Melba (Lewis) & Catherine (Whitten) - Melvin & Betty Moreland's daughters.*

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**Melba Lewis** - September 26, 2014 at 05:34 AM

CB

“ *My Grandfather was a special kind of man, seldom found, with integrity, grit and real zest for life. He will be missed dearly by many. The world was a better place with him in it.*

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**cary becker** - September 26, 2014 at 05:06 AM



“ *America the Beautiful was purchased for the family of Gerald L. Cunningham.*



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September 25, 2014 at 11:16 AM