



Gaylen Rodgers

April 23, 1935 - May 9, 2025

Gaylen Max Rodgers, 90, Topeka, Kansas, passed away on Friday, May 9, 2025.

Gaylen was born in Healey, Kansas, the son of Lowell and Beulah Rodgers. He graduated from McPherson High School in 1953. Gaylen attended Wichita State University on a basketball scholarship in 1953-54 and earned a Bachelor of Education from McPherson College in 1958. He married Mary Mathes in McPherson on May 26, 1956; she preceded him in death in 2017. Gaylen taught in Yates Center, Kansas for 15 years, during this time he was the head coach for boys' basketball and taught industrial arts and drivers ed. Gaylen worked at the McPherson Refinery for 19 years until he retired in 1998. After Mary's retirement in 2001, they enjoyed travelling to all 50 states and 37 countries.

Gaylen's main interest was sports, and he participated in basketball and track throughout his school years. He was named All State at McPherson High School in basketball and played at Wichita State and McPherson College, where he was named Small College All American. After that, his love of basketball led him to coaching at Roxbury High School and Yates Center High School. Gaylen was inducted into the McPherson High School Wall of Fame in 2000, honoring him for the many accomplishments in high school basketball. He was an avid fan of the Jayhawks, Royals, and Chiefs. He watched all their

games, even during the not-too-successful years.

Gaylen loved being with his grandchildren, feeding the fish, teaching them to ride a bike, going fishing, watching them play sports and allowing them to drive the golf cart.

Gaylen was a member of the Optimist Club, Lions Club, the Elks, KNEA, OCAW Local 5-558 of McPherson, and Turkey Creek Golf Club. He was a lifetime member of the McPherson First United Methodist Church and booster clubs for McPherson High School and McPherson College. He loved playing golf with his buddies. He spent many mornings at the McPherson Senior Center drinking coffee, playing dominoes or pool and was a member of their travelling pool team.

Gaylen always had a puzzle to work on. In his younger days, he enjoyed helping his father-in-law work on the farm, helping with training horses, and hunting quail, pheasant, and prairie chicken with his dogs.

Gaylen is survived by his children, Lori Spain (John) of Topeka and Julie Brehm (Randy) of Eatonton, Georgia; grandchildren, Christopher Spain (Clare) of Prairie Village, Kansas, Mackenzie Brehm of Atlanta, Georgia, Carter Brehm (Juliana) of Atlanta, and Benjamin Spain (Alison) of Topeka; great-grandchildren, Jade and Philomena Spain; and his sister, Carole Navrat of Hillsboro, Kansas. He was also preceded in death by his parents, sister, Twilla Spiller, and brother, Leland Rodgers.

Funeral service will be 11 a.m. Wednesday, May 14, 2025, at McPherson First United Methodist Church, 1200 E Kansas Ave, McPherson KS 67460. Burial will follow in McPherson Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the church or

McPherson Senior Center and sent in care of Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home, 2801 SW Urish Road, Topeka KS 66614.

Condolences may be sent online to www.kevinbrennanfamily.com.

Cemetery Details

McPherson Cemetery

1601 Cemetery Drive
McPherson, KS 67460

Previous Events

Funeral Service

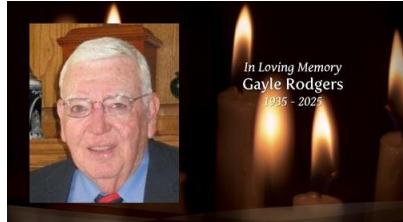
MAY **14**. 11:00 AM (CT)

McPherson First United Methodist Church
1200 E Kansas Avenue
McPherson, KS 67460

Tribute Wall



“ Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Gaylen Rodgers



Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home - May 13, 2025 at 03:59 PM

BD

“ May God comfort you during this time. Very nice tribute to your Dad. Keeping you all in our prayers. Barb DeWalt

Barb DeWalt - May 16, 2025 at 09:46 AM

ES

“ Ed and I have so many great memories that include Gaylen and Mary. They were such special neighbors to us here at the Cedars in McPherson. We loved them!

Ed & June Switzer - May 13, 2025 at 10:14 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Gaylen Rodgers.



May 12, 2025 at 05:44 PM



“ *Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Gaylen Rodgers.*



May 11, 2025 at 01:44 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gaylen Rodgers.

May 11, 2025 at 01:44 PM



“ *Galen was my industrial arts teacher at Yates Center High school. He taught me and many others a lot. I still remember good conversations with him. He was a very nice man. My condolences to his family.*

Dallas Tebben - May 11, 2025 at 08:21 AM



“ *Lori and John, Chris and Ben, Kathy and I are so sorry to see of the passing of your father/grandfather. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. God Bless,
Rick and Kathy*

Rick Strecker - May 10, 2025 at 08:22 PM