



Leon Wilkinson

October 3, 1932 - March 25, 2024

Wilton Leon Wilkinson, 91, of Bloomfield, Iowa passed away on March 25, 2024 at the Bloomfield Care Center. He was born on October 3, 1932 near Troy, Iowa to Everett Harold and Reva Marie Padgett Wilkinson. He graduated from Troy High School in 1950. After high school, Leon farmed with his father and worked at John Morrell until entering the Army in 1953. He served two years of which 16 months was in Korea. He met his wife, Judith Pearson, after returning from service. They were married on September 24, 1955 in Ottumwa, Iowa.

Leon worked for John Morrell until he started college at Northeast Missouri State Teachers College on the G.I. Bill. He graduated in May 1959 with a B.S. in Education, majoring in Math and minoring in Physical Education, English, and History. He taught and coached for two years in Russell, Iowa before taking a job in Lineville, Iowa where he also taught and coached. While teaching in Lineville, he was awarded a National Science Foundation Scholarship to attend graduate classes at Southeastern State College in Durant, Oklahoma. He accepted the honor and spent three summers taking classes in Oklahoma, moving his family with him every summer. He graduated with a Master's of Teaching in Arts and Math in 1966.

Leon started teaching for Davis County Community Schools in 1966. He took additional courses and was certified in Education Administration. He became

vice principal for Davis County in 1967. After three years, he took a principal position in Redfield, Iowa where he worked for two years before missing Davis County and moving back. At Davis County he was vice principal and athletic director for many years, retiring in 1992.

After retirement, Leon remained an active member of the community and served on many boards and committees. He was a charter member of the local Optimist Club and has served in several capacities over the years. He was the Iowa Optimist District Governor, served on several state committees and was appointed to the International Committee. He served on two Citizen Boards in the 8th Judicial District, was Chair of the local Foster Care Review where he received the Governor Volunteer Award and received the Volunteer of the Year award from the 8th Judicial District for involvement in the Youth Offenders Program. He had served as Chair of the Bloomfield Historic Preservation Commission, been a board member for several years with the Davis County Historical Preservation. He was also a member of the Davis County Historical Society, served as Chair for the Iowa Mormon Trails Association, member of the Board of Central Iowa Tourism, was a trustee of the Davis County Hospital, a member of the local AARP chapter serving in several offices, the Airport Commission, and has served on several committees for Main Street in Bloomfield.

He is survived by his wife, Judith Wilkinson; four children, Jeanne (Craig) Kelley of Knoxville, Iowa, Wilton Leon Wilkinson Jr. of Waukee, Iowa, Janice (Kirk) Bruce of Ames, Iowa, Julia (Gary) White of Bloomfield; five grandchildren, Bradon Kelley of Knoxville, Iowa, Jeremy (Kate Jopson) Bruce of San Fernando, California, Markus (Laura) Bruce of Bondurant, Iowa, Lyndsi (Jon) Antal of Lancaster, Missouri, Tyler (Shelby) White of Ottumwa, Iowa; six great-grandchildren, Leah Bruce, Lucas Bruce, Casen Antal, Chayten Antal, Kaden White, Korbin White; four sisters, Hannah Kirby of Centerville, Iowa, LaDonna Piper of Norwalk, Iowa, Lavenia (Dave) Davis of Des Moines, Iowa,

Cindy Knock of Williamsburg, Iowa; and a brother, Loren Wilkinson of Springhill, Florida.

He was preceded in death by his parents; two sisters, Laverda Rupe, Hildred Gordy; and four brothers-in-law, Jack Kirby, Bernard Piper, Ron Knock, and Royce Gordy.

Funeral services will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 30, 2024 at the Wagler Funeral Home in Bloomfield with Rhonda Eakins officiating. Burial with graveside military rites performed by Reed-Whisler Post #78 of the American Legion will be at the IOOF Cemetery in Bloomfield. Visitation will begin at 2:00 p.m. on Friday with the family present to greet friends from 5-7:00 p.m. at the funeral home. In lieu of flowers, memorials have been established to the Davis County "A" Club, Davis County Dollars for Scholars, Optimist Club, and Good Samaritan Society – Hospice in Ottumwa.

Cemetery Details

IOOF Cemetery

620 North Madison Street
Bloomfield, IA 52537

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 29. 2:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Wagler Funeral Home
304 West Jefferson Street
Bloomfield, IA 52537
(641) 664-3421
<https://www.waglerfuneralhome.com/>

Visitation with Family Present

MAR 29. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Wagler Funeral Home
304 West Jefferson Street
Bloomfield, IA 52537
(641) 664-3421
<https://www.waglerfuneralhome.com/>

Funeral Service

MAR **30**. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

Wagler Funeral Home
304 West Jefferson Street
Bloomfield, IA 52537
(641) 664-3421

<https://www.waglerfuneralhome.com/>

Tribute Wall

EF

“ *Evvy and family purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Leon Wilkinson.*



Evvy and family - March 29, 2024 at 04:20 PM



“ *Our condolences to the family and community for the loss of a very special man.
For me this news brought back warm memories from childhood and Mr. Wilkinson visiting family and friends when I was young. We all knew him as Uncle Red.
For Doug he remembers a wonderful, supportive educator who always had a smile and kind words to nudge us in the right direction.
Then later (Wilkie) and his family were great neighbors to Dougs mom and a man passionate about his community and organizations he was involved with. A life well lived. He will be missed.
Lynn and Doug Spilman*

Lynn Spilman - March 29, 2024 at 03:40 PM

SS

“ *1 file added to the album IMTA*



Susan Sims - March 28, 2024 at 10:47 AM

SS

Leon was a man with the energy and imagination of ten! He was devoted to preserving history, building people, remembering the sacrifices of others, and finding ways to connect to people from different backgrounds. I was grateful to interact with him in relation to his work with the Iowa Mormon Trail Association. I learned so much from him.

Susan Sims - March 28, 2024 at 10:50 AM

TC

“ *So sorry for your loss. Thinking of you all. Wilkie retired the year I graduated from school. He was always one that I could go talk to when something was bothering me and I could always count on him.*



Tina Comer Chidester - March 27, 2024 at 03:46 PM

TG

“ *Nobody gave better hugs than Uncle Leon. I will always remember his zest for life and his love for people everywhere. He had an infectious laugh and abounding energy. He truly used his life to lift others. He will be missed.*

Terri Gordy - March 27, 2024 at 03:05 PM

GS

“ *Georgia Stevens lit a candle in memory of Leon Wilkinson*



Georgia Stevens - March 27, 2024 at 02:07 PM

AT

“ I didn't really know him when I was at the high school but I always thought that if I needed someone beyond regular teachers, that I'd be able to go to him. He always seemed easy going and someone who cared.

Anne Tews - March 27, 2024 at 01:58 PM

KH

“ Simply the best. My deepest condolences and prayers for peace for all of you. Memories to support you must be so abundant. Kathy Hartwick

Kathy Hartwick - March 27, 2024 at 01:35 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Leon Wilkinson.



March 27, 2024 at 01:33 PM

MK

“ Mike & Jane Austin and Joe & Deb Kelley planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Leon Wilkinson.

Mike & Jane Austin and Joe & Deb Kelley - March 27, 2024 at 01:33 PM

RG

“ Regina Gooden lit a candle in memory of
Leon Wilkinson



Regina Gooden - March 27, 2024 at 01:13 PM

RG

He was a one of a kind in so many ways. Always interested and involved in so many activities. Touched so many lives, sympathy and prayers to the family.

Regina Gooden - March 27, 2024 at 01:17 PM

RP

“ A good colleague. I so liked and admired Leon. He will be missed.

Ray Prentis - March 27, 2024 at 12:43 PM