



Gene Willard

Jerseyville | Friday, October 29 2010

Gene Willard, 81, died at 10:30 a.m. Friday, October 29, 2010 at St. John's Hospice in Springfield, Il.

He was born in Shipman on Aug. 22, 1929, the oldest of three children born to the late Arthur & Minnie (Cloninger) Willard.

He was raised in Shipman and graduated from Shipman High School. He was employed as a sheet metal worker for the Norfolk Southern Railroad for over 35 years, and in his spare time enjoyed gardening, coon hunting, and bowling, participating in various leagues in both Alton & Jerseyville.

He married the former Rose Marie Hooper on June 17, 1949 in Jerseyville, and together they shared 58 years together before her death on Oct. 8, 2007.

Surviving are his four children & their spouses, who considered their Dad to be the "Greatest Man on Earth"; Larry & Gaynell Willard of Virginia Beach, Va., Roy & Charlene Willard of Brighton, Donald & Elaine Willard of Alton, and his loving daughter, Jeanie & Michael Krause of Arlington, Tn.; 11 Grandchildren; 10 Great Grandchildren and one due in December; two sisters, Bonadell Gillespie and Carolyn Sue Estes both of East Alton.

Visitation will be from 4 to 8 p.m., Monday at the Crawford Funeral Home in Jerseyville, where funeral services will be conducted at 10 a.m. Tuesday. His son, Larry, will conduct the services.

Burial will be in the Valhalla Memorial Park in Godfrey.

Memorials may be given to the American Diabetes Association.?