



Willie Yates

April 12, 1929 - April 11, 2016

Willie Yates, age 86 of Purcell, passed away Monday, April 11, 2016, at the Lexington Nursing Home. Willie Dean Yates was born April 12, 1929 in Purcell, OK. His parents were Lester Virgil Yates and Hattie Mae (Matthews) Yates. He grew up in Purcell and attended Purcell Schools, graduating in 1950. Willie was voted most popular and best dancer his senior year. Willie then attended OBU on a sports scholarship for a year, before joining the United States Army. He served a brief time, but returned home to care for his parents. On January 1, 1955, Willie married his best friend and true love, Joan Cecelia Bennett. They made their home in Purcell where together they raised 4 children, son, Steve and daughters, Diana, Karen and Gail. Willie began working for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, a career that spanned more than 39 years. He retired in 1992 as a Highway Inspector. When not working, Willie enjoyed playing tennis and even taught tennis at the Purcell Community Center. He enjoyed walking and garage sales, and never missed an opportunity to go fishing. Willie was a long time and faithful member of the Johnson Road Baptist Church. He will be remembered as a wonderful husband, father and grandfather, brother, uncle and a good friend. He will be dearly missed! He was preceded in death by: His wife, Joan Cecilia Yates; Grandchildren; Dwight and Dewayne Gilleland; Parents, Lester and Hattie Mae Yates and Brothers; Virgil Yates, Bert Lane and James Lane; Sisters, Dorothy Burton, Louise Snow, Norma Purser and Beatrice Meade. Willie leaves behind: 4 children; Steve Yates of Kent, WA, Diana Yates-Gray

of Purcell Karen Gilleland and husband Douglas Sr. of Purcell Gail Cheatwood and husband Larry of Lexington 11 grandchildren; Cheri Gray-Coker and husband Donnie, Douglas Gilleland Jr. and wife Anissa, Terry Gray Jr., Jeffrey Yates and wife Kristen, Rebecca Gibson and husband Adam, Bruce Gray and wife Jamie, Tiffany Cheatwood, Justin Cheatwood and wife Angela, Jason Yates and wife Crystal, Jessica Hunter and husband Jeremy and Travis Cheatwood and wife Courtney; 30 great grandchildren; also many cousins, nieces, nephews and a host of other loving relatives and friends. Funeral Services are scheduled for 2:00 P.M. Friday, April 15, 2016, at the Wilson-Little Funeral Home Chapel. Burial will follow at the Hillside Cemetery. Arrangements by Wilson-Little Funeral Home in Purcell. Send online condolences at wilsonlittle.com.