



## Wilmer Eugene "Gene" Colby

August 7, 1929 - September 15, 2020

Wilmer Eugene "Gene" Colby, 91, passed away September 15, 2020 in St. Augustine, Florida where he had been living with his daughter and son-in-law since June. Gene was born August 7, 1929 in Beloit, Kansas to Wilmer and Mae Colby. In the early 1930's, the family of three moved to Council Grove, Kansas where Gene would grow up. Gene was a star athlete at Council Grove High School, graduated in 1948, then joined the Navy where he served in the Submarine unit and played football for the Navy wearing jersey #44. He married his high school sweetheart and the love of his life, Peggy Darlene (Horton), in New London, Connecticut on December 18, 1948 and they went on to have two cherished daughters, Lynda and Diane. They were happily married for over 71 years.

Before moving back to his hometown in 1965, Gene worked with Fairmont Food in Hutchinson and Dolly Madison in Kansas City. Back in Council Grove, Gene and Peggy purchased and ran Colby's Café for several years until Gene went into business with his Dad at Colby's Toggery, a successful men's clothing store he would eventually buy from his father. In addition to work and family, Gene loved his home town and worked to make Council Grove a great place to live. He very rarely missed a local football game for the high school and elementary boys and attended many K-State and K.C. Chiefs games. He enjoyed working with young men in 4H, helping them produce a style show. Gene was a beloved friend and community member and served in many local

organizations including the Chamber of Commerce, Investment Club, Council Grove County Club, and was a life-long member and past president of the Rotary Club. When he retired in 1992, Gene and Peggy spent several years as “winter Texans” before eventually moving to South Texas full-time. In Texas, Gene again became a valued friend and member of the community and enjoyed watching the golfers from his home on hole 5, playing golf and bridge, and serving on the board of Alamo Country Club. Gene and Peggy had the opportunity to visit many places both in the USA and overseas during their retirement. Gene always had a quick and sincere smile for everyone and found joy in living every day.

Gene is survived by daughter Lynda and her husband Stuart Whitlock of St. Augustine, FL; daughter Diane Wolfe of Council Grove, KS; grandchildren Kevin Zimmerman, Darren Zimmerman and his fiancée Brianna, Angela Hulays and her husband David; Brian Whitlock and his wife Jennifer; great grand-children Owen and Max Hulays, Colby, Charlotte and Emma Whitlock; and his aunt Betty (Bob) Fuller. Gene was preceded in death by his loving wife Peggy and his parents Wilmer and Mae Colby.

No services are planned at this time. Memorial donations may be made to Morris County Hospital Foundation, Council Grove, Kansas.