Obituaries

Gerald William Gilkey

LAMAR, Mo. - Gerald William Gilkey, 83, of Lamar, Mo., died Thursday, Sept. 29, 2005, at Barton County Memorial Hospital.

Gilkey

He was born on April 14, 1922, to Ray Edwin and Lizzie Ellen (Gordon) Gilkey in Sheldon, Mo. He graduated from Sheldon High School in 1939 to attend Kansas State Teachers College.

He married Betty Jo Medlin on June 18, 1942. She survives.

He was Staff Sergeant of the 11th U.S. Army Air Corps 1942 to 1945. After serving his country in World War II, he returned to own and operate a Marshall Auto Parts Store in Sheldon.

He and his family moved to Fort Scott, to work with his wife's brothers, Jewell & Gerald Medlin, at their Oldsmobile dealership. In 1950, they moved to Lamar, Mo., to join the Medlin Ford agency. In 1961, he purchased Gathman Chevrolet, later adding Oldsmobile, Buick, and Pontiac. In 1984, in partnership with his son, Steve, they became the first GM / Ford dealership combination in the United States. He was an active member of the Lamar City Council as a Councilman 1959- to 1965 and Mayor 1965 to 2001. During his years as Mayor, Lamar saw the completion of the Lamar Water Plant, Marion Thiebaud Auditorium, and Lamar Aquatic Park.

His many other accomplishments include in 1990: Lamar Chamber of Commerce Man of the Year; 1991: Outstanding Community Service Award; 1994: Lamar Rotarian of the Year and a Paul Harris Fellow; 2001: Distinguished Service Award (Missouri Municipal League); 2004: Outstanding Missourian presented by the Missouri House of Representatives

He was a charter member of Ozark Gateway Regulatory Planning Meeting; a board member of the U.S. Highway 71 Corridor Coalition; Missouri Municipal League Board of Directors; Jasper County Conclave; Past President Lamar Rotary; Member Lamar Fair Board; Board Member, Barton County State Bank; Lamar Masonic Lodge No. 292 A.F. & A.M., Valley of Joplin Scottish Rite Abou Ben Adhem Shrine Mosque; and a Member and Greeter, First Christian Church

Additional survivors include son, Steve Gilkey; a niece; a grandson; two granddaughters; and seven great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents Ray and Lizzie and brother, Paul Edwin Gilkey.

Visitation will be from 1 to 3 p.m. Monday, at the First Christian Church in Lamar, with funeral services immediately following at 3 p.m. at the First Christian Church.

Arrangements are under the direction of the Daniel Funeral Home of Lamar.

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