



Gary Mettenbrink

May 30, 1951 - March 7, 2024

Gary Ralph Mettenbrink, age 72, of Grand Island, passed away unexpectedly on Thursday, March 7, 2024 at his home.

A funeral service will be held on Friday, March 22nd at 10am at Messiah Lutheran Church, with Pastor Steven Peeler officiating. The service will be livestreamed on the church's Facebook page. A visitation will be held Thursday, March 21st from 4-7pm at the church. Burial will take place at the Grand Island City Cemetery. Memorials suggested to the Jeremy Buckner Memorial Scholarship (funded through the GIPS Foundation), Voice for Companion Animals or Messiah Lutheran Church. All Faiths Funeral Home is entrusted with arrangements. Condolences can be left at www.giallfaiths.com.

Gary was born May 30, 1951 in Grand Island to Ralph Henry and Arlene (Lyhane) Mettenbrink.

He attended rural grade school and graduated from Senior High in 1969.

He was united in marriage to Roxanne Lonberger on December 3, 1977, and to this union 2 daughters were born. He was united in marriage to Kim (Nonneman) Buckner, on January 24, 2004, gaining two stepchildren, and seven beloved grandchildren. He always referred to Kim as "My Little Bride" even after 20 years together.

In his younger years, he was active in 4-H and swimming. He still holds a swimming record in Hastings. Gary had a memory that could not be compared to anyone and loved math. He often spoke about his school years, and how he “never had to study for a test, as he remembered everything.” He had a beautiful singing voice and was always proud of his participation in the Scarlet and Cream Singers at UNL.

Gary’s passion in life was farming, every aspect of it. He really enjoyed dirt leveling, and scraping, and his time spent in the combine “going round and round” in the fields.

Gary was laid back and truly lived life one day at a time. Whatever happened yesterday didn’t matter because each day was a new beginning. He approached life with the attitude of “It is what it is” or “We’ll figure it out” “That was Yesterday, this is Today” “It will be OK”. Gary often liked to just sit and take in the world around him. He was always there, behind the scenes, watching and loving in only ways he could do.

Gary enjoyed helping with the Saturday suppers at the church with his wife, Kim and the people they served. He was also a great whistler and was known to whistle Christmas songs year-round. The Hallmark Channel on TV was his absolute favorite pastime, after a busy day. Especially when the new Christmas Hallmark movies came out! He had a love for children that was evident with his children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, great nieces and nephews and enjoyed attending their activities. He was so proud of his grandchildren, and great nieces and nephews and their friends and often shared a fun moment. He especially liked being “Grandpa Uber Eats”, showing up with a favorite food item for a grandchild, and a needed ride to an activity. Gary was always there no matter what, distance and time didn’t stop him. He will be remembered as just being a “silly big kid”, the arm-wrestling

champ, and his special “windy” messages to those he loved. Gary loved to grocery shop and buy new foods to bring to his mom to try. Gary grocery shopped for Kim, as she made lists for family dinners, M & M’s, fruit and items he thought the grandkids would love to stop and enjoy. He was a wiz in the kitchen, and always helped with family dinners and the cleanup. He learned a lot of the organizing of meals from his mom, as a youngster. Gary loved animals, especially dogs and his favorite, kitties. He loved he rescued “Monster” as a baby when he was out in the field this past year. Monster and Emma (office kitty) enjoyed many a day at the office “helping” Gary with paperwork at his desk. He cared for his dog and kitty friends gained from his children and stepchildren and often shared pictures of them. Henry was his first kitty shared with Kim at home, and when he passed, Hank was there and was Gary’s “Little Buddy” always greeting him when he came home, jumping on his shoulders, and feeding him every single morning. He was dedicated to his family, took care of everyone and truly loved everyone with all his heart. Gary was the glue that held our family together in every aspect. He was so proud of his family and grandchildren. Gary was a valued friend, listener and weatherman extraordinaire He will be deeply missed and truly loved.

Gary is survived by his wife, Kim; daughters, Anastasia (Patrick) Wagner and Elysia Mettenbrink; stepson, Eric Buckner; stepdaughter, Stacia (Chris) Rice; grandchildren, Rylie, Halle and Kyndal Rice, Ava Buckner, Jacob Buckner, Mya Maher and Spencer Bowen; mother, Arlene Mettenbrink; brothers, John (Patsy) and Lynn Mettenbrink; sister, Carol Mettenbrink; sister in-law, Kathy Nonneman; daughter in-law, Amy (Nick) Maher; nieces and nephews, Phillip (Britni) Wieck, Trent (Angie) Mettenbrink, Chalee (Thomas) Rehm, Joel (Lindsey) Mettenbrink and Shaunna (Adam) Adinolfi and many great nieces and nephews, other relatives and treasured friends.

Gary is preceded in death by his father, Ralph Henry Mettenbrink;

grandparents, Henry and Beulah Mettenbrink and Maro and Genevieve Lyhane; nephew, TJ York; stepson, Jeremy Buckner; sister in-law, Connie Jensen and in-laws, Lawrence and Elayne Nonneman.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR **21.** 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Messiah Lutheran Church
7th and Locust St.
Grand Island, NE 68801

Funeral Service

MAR **22.** 10:00 AM (CT)

Messiah Lutheran Church
7th and Locust St.
Grand Island, NE 68801

Tribute Wall

CM

“ Carol M. planted a grove of 5 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Mettenbrink.

Carol M. - March 28, 2024 at 01:54 PM

LP

“ Love, Suzie Price, PPD purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Gary Mettenbrink.



Love, Suzie Price, PPD - March 21, 2024 at 07:07 AM

LP

“ Love, Suzie Price, PPD planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Mettenbrink.

Love, Suzie Price, PPD - March 21, 2024 at 07:07 AM

MF

“ Meyer family purchased the Simply Elegant Spat hiphyllum for the family of Gary Mettenbrink.



Meyer family - March 21, 2024 at 12:36 AM

MF

“ Meyer family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Mettenbrink.

Meyer family - March 21, 2024 at 12:36 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Gary Mettenbrink.



March 20, 2024 at 05:30 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Gary Mettenbrink.



March 20, 2024 at 02:15 PM



“ Jeremy, Frank, Larry, Brian, Jordan, Erica planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Mettenbrink.

Jeremy, Frank, Larry, Brian, Jordan, Erica - March 20, 2024 at 02:15 PM



“ Garden Accent Stone - "Wherever a Beautiful Soul..." was purchased for the family of Gary Mettenbrink.



March 19, 2024 at 11:28 AM

YC

“ Your Friends at the Aurora Coop planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Mettenbrink.

Your Friends at the Aurora Coop - March 19, 2024 at 11:28 AM

JO

“ My deepest sympathies to Arlene, Kim and the entire family. June Cates Oliphant

June Cates Oliphant - March 19, 2024 at 09:14 AM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gary Mettenbrink.



March 18, 2024 at 07:21 PM

PM

“ Patricia M. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Mettenbrink.

Patricia M. - March 18, 2024 at 07:21 PM

LS

“ May all the special memories you shared with your loved one, stay with you and bring you comfort and peace. Thinking of you at this difficult time. With deepest sympathy, Larry and Jody Seney



Larry and Jody Seney - March 17, 2024 at 02:32 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Gary Mettenbrink.



March 17, 2024 at 02:12 PM



“ Love, Susie purchased the Blue Caribbean Bouquet for the family of Gary Mettenbrink.



Love, Susie - March 16, 2024 at 11:53 AM



“ Love, Susie planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Mettenbrink.

Love, Susie - March 16, 2024 at 11:53 AM



“ Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Gary Mettenbrink.



March 15, 2024 at 03:43 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Gary Mettenbrink.



March 15, 2024 at 01:21 PM



“ Annette Wetzel, Terry and Patti Wetzel planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Mettenbrink.

Annette Wetzel, Terry and Patti Wetzel - March 15, 2024 at 01:21 PM



“ Brett McDonald & Family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Gary Mettenbrink.



Brett McDonald & Family - March 15, 2024 at 11:56 AM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Gary Mettenbrink.



March 15, 2024 at 11:25 AM

TF

“ *The GRACE Cancer Foundation planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Mettenbrink.*

The GRACE Cancer Foundation - March 15, 2024 at 11:25 AM