

Thomas 'Gene' Eugene Secrest, 89, passed away at home with his wife by his side in Spearfish, SD on February 8, 2025. He was born on June 11, 1935, the third of four children, to Fred and Minnie Secrest, in Farmington, NM.

In 1947 the family moved to Sturgis, SD where Gene lived until joining the US Navy in 1952. He served in the Korean War on an ammunition ship and on an icebreaker in the Arctic Ocean, leading to a lifelong desire to return to Alaska.

In 1956, after enlisting in the US Army, he met the love of his life, Marilyn Hudson. They were married on June 10, 1957, at Hereford, SD and promptly left for Ft. Polk, Louisiana, beginning a life of travel. He served in Germany and at a number Army bases with their four children born in South Dakota, Colorado and Hawaii. He served two tours of duty in Vietnam. The final two years of service he was instructor in the ROTC Program at the University of Texas at Austin.

Gene retired from the Army in 1972 and in 1974, returned with the family to Sturgis, SD. He worked as a welder, gunsmith and finally on the crews working to decommission the Minuteman missile sites in Western SD.

With Marilyn by his side, they enjoyed an active retirement with the long-awaited Alaskan trip, visits to Australia, Ireland, other European countries and most the of states in the US. His family grew with grandchildren and great-grandchildren; Gene and Marilyn would arrive unexpectedly to spend time with them. He just shook his head at having 25 great grands and one on the way. Close to his heart were the members of Charlie Company platoon he led on his second tour of duty in Vietnam 1970. The reunions were held in cities around the US and enjoyed continuing brotherhood.

He was a member of the Sturgis Masonic Lodge #47, the Powder River Masonic Lodge #135, Broadus MT, and the Yellowstone Lodge #88 at Ft. Buford, Dakota Territory. He received a 61-year pin from the Masons. He was also a member of the Naja Shrine in Rapid City where was a regular volunteer driver for the Shrine bus that picked up children and took them to the Shriner's Children's Hospital in Minneapolis, MN. He had some great stories about those trips.

Gene and Marilyn bred and raised Arabian horses. Each colt was a favorite and was handled gently from birth. Gene rode in parades around the region with the Naja Shrine Cowboy unit for many years.

Always interested in creating things, he learned wood turning from his brother-in-law and became an avid woodworker, creating beautiful items that he would not sell, but would give away in a heartbeat.

The Midwest Honor Flight was the highlight of 2022 when he was excited and proud to make the visit to Washington DC with hundreds of other veterans in the company of his son.

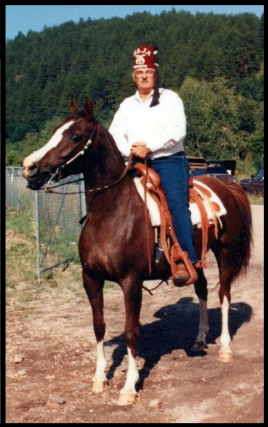
He is survived by his wife Marilyn, four children: Marian Alderman (Wayne) Spearfish SD, Patty Weatherford, Gillette WY, Gene Secrest (Kim) Spearfish SD and Roger Secrest (Sheri) of Black Hawk SD; Eleven grandchildren and 26 great-grandchildren. Brother-in-law Mike Carney and lifelong friend Alvina Meirose.

Gene is preceded by his parents, Fred and Minnie Secrest, sister and brother-in-law Florence and William (Billy Swesey), sister and brother-in-law Punky and Bob Barden and sister Effie Carney.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.kinkadefunerals.com.

Thank you for your presence and condolences.





*Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those
Who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory,
forever and ever.
Amen*

In Loving Memory Of Thomas E. "Gene" Secrest

Born

June 11, 1935
Farmington, New Mexico

Died

February 8, 2025
Spearfish, South Dakota

Funeral Service

Wednesday, February 19, 2025, 1:00 p.m.
Kinkade Funeral Chapel
Sturgis, South Dakota

Officiant

Pastor Bill Meirose

Musical Selections

"Go Rest High"
"Grandpa, Tell Me About the Good Old Days"
"Wind Beneath My Wings" "Amazing Grace"

Pallbearers

Bryce Falzerano Jay Smith Ryan Smith
Mike Smith Levi Secrest
Cody Secrest Shannon Secrest

Honorary Pallbearers

Jennifer Falzerano Kirsten Bowman-Young
Denise Zolnoski Jaela Secrest
Members of Charlie Company
All His Family and Friends

Final Resting Place

Black Hills National Cemetery
Sturgis, South Dakota