

Seneca, KS

Duane M. Todd, 95, of Seneca, died on Monday, July 10, 2017, at Life Care Center of Seneca.

Duane M. Todd was born on a farm near Clay Center, Kansas on July 8, 1922 to Warren and Edith Mina Todd. Duane often commented that he started working a team of horses in the field when he was 8 years old. Duane attended country schools, and in the days before school buses, drove himself to Clay Center High, graduating in 1940.

Upon graduation, and having acquired his country school teaching certificate, Duane taught school for two years to save money for college. World War II changed his plans. Todd joined the Navy in 1942, and became a pilot, specializing in multi engine craft such as the Consolidated PBY Catalina, and the Consolidated PB4Y-2 Privateer. While stationed at the Naval Air base in Hutchison, Kansas he met Polly Zenor, a recent graduate of Wichita State in speech therapy, at a church gathering. They were married December 27, 1945 at Hutchison, Kansas. As Duane pursued his education, Polly continued to work in her chosen field in both Hutchison and Lawrence, Kansas. Using the GI bill, Duane graduated from Kansas University with a degree in business administration.

Duane went to work for Deere & Co in January 1949, as a sales rep, out of the Kansas City, Branch. While making a stop at the John Deere dealership in Seneca, Kansas he learned that the owner was looking for an energetic young partner. He and his young wife decided to move to Seneca, and by 1952, Todd Tractor Co was born. In 1979, a farm division was established. Their family dealership is now 65 years old, with two more generations of Todds.

Duane devoted himself to his family, his business, and his community, serving multiple terms on the Nemaha Valley School Board, the Seneca town council, Earl W. Taylor Post 21 of the American Legion and as a board member of the United Methodist church.

While attending a 40-year High school reunion in Clay Center, Duane was reacquainted with Ruth Yarrow Lang. They were married on November 2, 1980 at First Baptist Church in Clay Center and enjoyed a long and happy marriage of 36 years. Ruth survives at the home. He is also survived by five children, Margaret (Steve) Songer of Leavenworth, Kansas, Nancy (Wayne) Ronnebaum of Beloit, Kansas, Warren (Brenda) Todd of Seneca Douglas (Karen) Todd of Seneca and Roger (Caroline) Todd of Havensville; and three step-children, Carolyn Branson of Manhattan, Kansas, Ken Lang (Cindy) of Manhattan, Kansas and Ron (Marcy) Lang of Newton, Kansas. He also leaves 18 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, Polly Todd, on January 9, 1980 after a struggle with cancer; two brothers, Dr. Donald Todd and Dr. Eldon Todd; and two sisters, Margaret Mitchell, and Clema Todd.

Duane believed in God, and believed in a hereafter. Most likely he's riding one of his favorite Arabian horses through heaven right now.

A scheduled visitation will be held on Thursday evening from 6 to 8 PM, at the Lauer Funeral Home, family and friends will come together to celebrate Duane's life at 10:00 AM on Friday, July 14th at United Methodist Church in Seneca. Burial will take place at the Seneca Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family would like to suggest that donations be made to the United Methodist Church, in Seneca, Kansas, or the Nemaha Valley Community Hospital.