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# Bruce Willis Buehler

1926 - 2020



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Bruce Willis Buehler

July 25, 1926 - December 18, 2020

Wichita, Kansas - The Buehler family sadly announces the passing of their beloved husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather, Bruce Willis Buehler. Bruce's family has a long history in Kansas; his paternal grandparents Johan Karl & Regina Deininger Buehler immigrated to the United States from Germany in 1877. Johan was a stone mason and also had a small farm near Frederick. Bruce's father, Benjamin Buehler was born in 1887 in Dorrance, KS and attended Enterprise School (German American Academy) in Enterprise, KS. His mother was Helen Nelson Skiles who was born in Pittsburg PA in 1891. Her parents, William Cutten and Olive Wilson Skiles, moved to KS for health reasons

and homesteaded near Frederick, so Helen grew up on a small farm and later attended Mt. Allison College in Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada.

Bruce's parents Ben and Helen were married on January 3, 1912 and Bruce was born in Hutchinson, KS on July 25, 1926, the fifth of six children and grew up in Bushton. The family owned a general store, the Bushton Mercantile Company; Bruce remembered how during the depression they always had plenty to eat since the produce they could not sell was brought home. He always laughed and said it was years before he realized bananas were yellow! Ben was a good businessman and accumulated 480 acres in Rice County and 1200 acres in Wichita County. Helen made Bruce take piano lessons and though as a child he was not happy about it he eventually came to deeply appreciate that fact and enjoyed playing for many years. His kids recall listening to all the "after parties" with guests singing around the piano as Bruce played; the wider extended Buehler family share memories of his playing during the holidays.

Bruce graduated from Bushton High School in May 1944 and on June 6th, 1944 enlisted in the Army Air Corps. Flight school was overloaded so he ended up in gunnery school in Las Vegas, NV. The war ended just as he graduated so he became a Personal Affairs Consultant in a discharge center in Amarillo, TX. With help from the GI Bill, Bruce attended Kansas State University and graduated in May 1950 with a degree in Psychology. It was at K-State on a blind date that he met Jacquelin Phyllis Rogers. They were married on September 10, 1948 and had five children who grew up and had families of their own, thus extending the Buehler clan: Belinda (Kevin Brown), Brad (Kim), Darcy (Nestor Weigand), Mitch (Myra), and Jack (Jaye). Education was important to Bruce; not only was it was a source of great pride that all of his children received college degrees but he quietly helped many others pay for their educations as well. The family lived in Great Bend, KS from 1951-1986 at which time with all of the kids grown and out of the house, Bruce and Jacque moved to Wichita, KS. They later settled for a few years in Sun City, Texas before returning to Wichita. Over time the Buehler clan grew to include 12 grandchildren and their spouses, 20 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great grandchild.

Bruce continued his involvement with Kansas State University long after his

graduation. He was a patron of the KSU Gardens, the Landon Lectures, Wichita Catbackers, and Eisenhower Circle; served as Vice-president of the KSU Alumni Board; was president of the Barton County Alumni Association; and was on the Board of Directors of the KSU Foundation including serving three years as President. And of course he and Jacque had season tickets to KSU football games for over fifty years.

Bruce had great acumen as a businessman; his primary business was insurance with agencies in Great Bend and Hays, but he invested in many other enterprises including oil, development, and motels. He was very proud of three motels in particular, developing Ramada Inns in Hays and Russell as well as the Canterbury Inn in Wichita. He founded Mid-Continent Energy Corporation in 1976, which successfully continues today and is run by his sons Brad, Mitch, and Jack.

He shared his business savvy with other business and civic organizations; he was a founding member and first president of the Barton County Community College Foundation; was named Man of the Year by the Great Bend Jaycees; served as president of several civic organizations including the Great Bend Jaycee, Lions Club, United Way, and the Great Bend Petroleum Club; was a director of the Great Bend Security State Bank and the Great Bend Industrial Development Committee; and contributed generously to many charities throughout his life including churches, the American Red Cross (a 10 Gallon donor), the Johnson Center for Basic Cancer Research, and the Wichita Community Foundation.

Memorials have been established with: Wichita Community Foundation, 301 N. Main S-100, Wichita, KS 67202; American Red Cross – Midway Kansas Chapter, 707 N. Main, Wichita, KS 67203.

A Celebration of Life will be planned for a later date. Services in care of Downing & Lahey East Mortuary. Share tributes online at: [www.dlwichita.com](http://www.dlwichita.com)

To Plant Memorial Trees in memory, please visit our [Sympathy Store](#).

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## MEMORIAL EVENTS

No memorial events are currently scheduled. To offer your sympathy during this difficult time, you can now have memorial trees planted in a National Forest in memory of your loved one.

Funeral services provided by  
DOWNING & LAHEY MORTUARY EAST CHAPEL

[6555 EAST CENTRAL](#)  
[Wichita, KS 67206-1924](#)  
[\(316\) 682-4553](#)

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## MEMORIES & CONDOLENCES

Guest Book sponsored by Wichita Eagle

What would you like to say about Bruce?

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Your Name

Your Email Address

Your Relationship



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**2 entries**

December 20, 2020

Rest Bruce, until you hear at dawn,  
the low, clear reveille of God.

Thank you for your service to this nation. U.S. Army Air Force, WWII.

**Harry Simpson**

December 20, 2020

CHUCK AND I WERE SO SORRY TO HEAR ABOUT BRUCE'S PASSING. WHAT A GREAT GUY! I ALWAYS ENJOYED SEEING HIM AND JACKIE AT THE CANDLE CLUB. I THINK ABOUT THEM EVERY TIME I WEAR MY MASTERS SHIRT THAT THEY BROUGHT TO ME (1998). OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS GO OUT TO THE FAMILY DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME. MAY THE MEMORIES OF THIS SPECIAL MAN BRING YOU PEACE. REST IN PEACE FRIEND. EVERY MAN A WILDCAT!

**CHUCK AND GUYETTA MARTIN**

Friend

**INVITE OTHERS TO ADD MEMORIES**

Share to let others add their own memories and condolences



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