



Gary Winston Self

December 17, 1938 - September 7, 2024

Gary Winston Self passed peacefully into the loving arms of Jesus, his Savior, at Sierra View Homes in Reedley California in the early morning hours of September 7th following a seven year hard fought battle with Alzheimer's disease.

Gary was born to the late Russell (Bus) and Marie Archer Self in the former Selma Sanitarium on December 17, 1938. As a child he attended Walnut Elementary and graduated from Selma High School in June of 1957. On May 29, 1958 he married Rita Christensen, his high school sweetheart. Eighteen months later they were blessed with the arrival of their first and only child, Terri Lynn. Gary's wishes were answered when he was blessed with a baby girl.

Gary is survived by his wife, Rita, his daughter Terri Fishel (Scott), his granddaughters; Stephanie Beer (Gary) and Leslie Croissant (Todd), great-grandchildren; Christian and Averie Croissant and Emily Beer. Gary is also survived by his older brother, Milton Self and his wife Janet, sisters-in-law; Marcia Christensen Curley of Vancouver, British Columbia and Susan Christensen of Houston, Texas. He has numerous nieces and nephews near and far who dearly loved their Uncle Gary.

On September 8, 1958 Gary went to work for United Grocers, later known as

Fleming Foods, as a warehouseman. He worked there faithfully until his retirement on March 31, 1997. Shortly after he went to work there, he suffered a head injury on the job that landed him in the hospital for three weeks and another three weeks at home recovering. Other than the head injury, Gary was very proud of the fact he never called in sick in all those years. Gary carried his little New Testament in his pocket to work every day and spent many a coffee break and lunch hour counseling with and witnessing to men he worked with.

Gary dearly loved his family and was so proud of his daughter, granddaughters and great-grandchildren. As a father, he taught Terri how to fish at a young age, leading to her love of fishing. Every October, Gary would take Terri to pick up walnuts from her grandparents' trees and as she became a teen, he spent hours teaching her how to drive a stick shift Volkswagen Bug. More recently, they enjoyed their lunchtime outings while Rita was hosting her bridge group. As a grandfather, he would attend all of Stephanie and Leslie's events and he spent almost every Sunday morning driving to Kingsburg to pick them up and take them to Sunday School and church service. Once he became a great-grandpa, he gained his newest and proudest title, Pappy. From their earliest years he was "the greats" biggest fan, both academically and athletically. Whether it was t-ball, soccer, swimming, softball, baseball, basketball, volleyball, or football, he attended every game he could and was seen cheering from his lawn chair, stadium seat, and most recently his wheelchair. It did not matter if it was an away game or close to home, Gary wanted to see his kids compete.

Gary had two hobbies, competitive running and gardening. He ran until he was seventy-eight years of age when a spinal fusion put an end to his running. When the great-grandchildren were about four years of age, he started teaching them how to run competitively. They would participate in

community events from Madera, to Reedley, to Kingsburg. It gave him great joy to watch them compete. His other hobby was caring for his yard. Gary was a meticulous gardener and mowed his lawn twice a week like clockwork. He could even be seen clipping his grass with scissors if the lawnmower missed a spot. In fact, the most difficult thing about leaving his home of forty-seven years in Selma and moving to Kingsburg in 2019, was a gardening service tended to his yard. No matter how perfect the yard was, it was never done to his satisfaction.

Gary and Rita were lifetime residents of Selma until Rita felt the need to be closer to family and they moved to Kingsburg. The move helped with assistance in caring for Gary as his Alzheimer's disease progressed. Gary and Rita had begun attending Concordia Lutheran Church in Kingsburg before the move and joined as members shortly after, immediately feeling welcomed and loved by their church family.

Gary was a very humble man with a deep and simple faith in Jesus. He was a member of Pella Lutheran Church in Selma for many years serving on the church council as deacon, a position that he loved. He assisted in ministering to the ill, the shut-in, and the dying. He often took communion to these people and was welcomed wherever he went. Gary would serve in the church as an usher or wherever there was a need. No job was beneath him regardless of the work needing to be done. He would weed the flowerbeds, vacuum the social hall, wash the dishes, bring the silver communion cups and chalices home to polish, wash and dry them, and take it all back to the church, no one being the wiser.

Gary loved bible study and belonged to the several bible study groups over the years. He studied his bible daily until the day came when he struggled comprehending what he read, eventually losing his ability to read altogether.

Gary entered skilled nursing at Sierra View Homes in Reedley on January 26, 2024 and lived there until his passing. He received great care and several of the CNAs loved him. Several shed tears during his last few days on Earth.

A verse Gary had highlighted in his bible, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, in which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day-and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:7-8 NIV)

Celebration Of Life service will be held at 10:30 AM Friday, September 20th, 2024 at Concordia Lutheran Church, 1800 Sierra Street, Kingsburg.

Services have been entrusted to Salser & Dillard Creighton Chapel. Memorial Tributes and condolences may be offered by logging onto www.salseranddillard.com.

Previous Events

Celebration Of Life

SEP **20**. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (PT)

Concordia Lutheran Church
1800 Sierra Street
Kingsburg, CA 93631

Tribute Wall



“ *Salser & Dillard Creighton Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of Gary Winston Self*



Salser & Dillard Creighton Chapel - September 18, 2024 at 01:31 PM



“ *It was great knowing him at Pella.*

January 26, 2025 at 07:30 PM



“ *Heather Srigley planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Winston Self.*

Heather Srigley - September 22, 2024 at 03:35 PM



“ *Heather Srigley purchased the Sweet Snacks Gift Crate for the family of Gary Winston Self.*



Heather Srigley - September 22, 2024 at 03:35 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Gary Winston Self.



September 18, 2024 at 05:07 PM



“ Susan, stacey, joshua and deborah Christ planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary Winston Self.

Susan, stacey, joshua and deborah Christ - September 18, 2024 at 05:07 PM



“ Uncle Gary was the sweetest! He always had a smile and a positive spirit. The love he had for his family simply shined through him. Although, my memories are few (because we lived so far away) I am blessed to have them. They are all so full of love and I will always cherish them in my heart!!! You are healed and in the arms of Jesus but until we are all together in glory you will forever be missed! You HAVE run a GOOD race and your work on earth is done so rest easy Uncle Gary, God's good and FAITHFUL servant!

Deborah Braid - September 17, 2024 at 09:39 AM

MS

“ Sending condolences to the family. Our hearts break for the loss of your husband, father, grandfather, and pappy! Thinking of you all during this difficult time and praying for peace!

The last time we saw Gary was last year when he and Rita were at a KHS volleyball game cheering on his great-grand-daughters! He was beaming with pride! 🙏 David and Michelle Stone



Michelle Stone - September 17, 2024 at 12:51 AM