



Bern "Gene" Ballard

September 14, 1932 - April 16, 2026

Bern "Gene" Ballard, 93, of East Peoria, peacefully passed away surrounded by family on Thursday, April 16, 2026. He was born in Caraway, Arkansas on September 14, 1932, to Harvey and Winnie (Brickle) Ballard. On July 12, 1952, he married Ruthie Holden in Black Oak, Arkansas and they enjoyed nearly 74 years of marriage; she survives.

Also surviving are his children, Bobby Ballard of Washington, Rhonda (Steve) Breeden of Clinton, Teresa (Jeffrey) Hunt of Mesquite, TX, and Ronald (Trish) Ballard of East Peoria; his brother, Donald (Nadine) Ballard of Arkansas; 9 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and 2 great-great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by six brothers and 2 sisters.

Gene began his career at Caterpillar in the Foundry, then retired in 1982 from Morton Parts Facility after 28 years of service.

He spent his free time hunting, fishing, playing billiards, and watching stock car races with his sons. Above all, Gene loved being a dad and grandpa. His greatest joy was spending time with his family and grandchildren.

Gene's funeral service will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at Gary Deiters Funeral Home & Cremation Services in East Peoria, with visitation from 1:00 p.m. until the time of service. Stephen Bradd will officiate. Burial will follow at Fondulac Cemetery in East Peoria.

Online condolences may be left at www.GaryDeitersFH.com.

Cemetery Details

Fondulac Cemetery

1985 E. Washington Street
East Peoria, IL

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 21. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Gary Deiters Funeral Home & Cremation Services Inc. - East Peoria
444 E. Washington Street
East Peoria, IL 61611

Funeral Service

APR 21. 2:00 PM (CT)

Gary Deiters Funeral Home & Cremation Services
444 E. Washington Street
East Peoria, IL 61611
(309) 694-9831
gary@garydeitersfh.com

Tribute Wall



“ Gary Deiters Funeral Home & Cremation Services created a Tribute Video in memory of Bern "Gene" Ballard



Gary Deiters Funeral Home & Cremation Services - April 21 at 04:57 PM

DS

Aunt Ruthie and family , I'm terribly sorry about the loss of Uncle Gene. I love you all. May God give you peace like only he can during this difficult time. 🙏

Deanna "Ballard" Stuck - April 26 at 07:44 PM



“ 25 files added to the album Life Tributes



Gary Deiters Funeral Home & Cremation Services - April 20 at 04:55 PM

SB

“ 4 files added to the album Gene liked his cars



Steve Breeden - April 20 at 01:35 PM