



## **Gary Leon Whittington**

1940-2020

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Decatur ~ Ret. SMSGT Gary L. Whittington, 80, of Decatur went to be with our Lord Saturday, Oct. 24, 2020.

Funeral is 10:30 a.m. Thursday, Oct 29, at Hawkins Funeral Home in Decatur with burial at Pleasant Grove No. 1 Cemetery. Family will receive friends 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday at the funeral home.

Michael Jones will officiate. Pallbearers include Arin Whittington, Devin Nugent, Regi Rowe, Adam Whittington and Logan Wilson.

Military honors provided by the United States Air Force.

Gary was born Feb. 11, 1940, to Wilbur and Dorothy Whittington in Onawa, Iowa. Gary grew up in Nebraska, where according to his stories, he often hunted to provide the family dinner with a limited amount of ammo. On May 30, 1964, Gary and Truman Elizabeth Walker began a marriage that would endure for 56 years – a true love story.

A decorated senior master sergeant for more than 20 years, Gary was a true patriot in the USAF, which included three tours in Vietnam. Following retirement from the Air Force, he continued his career as human resources director for Allsup's Convenience Stores, Inc. Gary continued to "work" for the rest of his life, often welding horseshoes and cutting two-liter bottles for Truman's arts and craft shows. He was also instrumental in the development of the Wise County Veterans Memorial Park in Decatur.

Gary had a passion for the outdoors; from the annual family fishing trip in Colorado to teaching firearm safety to his grandchildren, shooting at "the hill;" Gary loved taking in God's country with those he loved. Gary Leon Whittington was a very wise, selfless, gentleman – one who never passed on the opportunity to hold the door open or simply lend a helping hand. He had a gentle voice but a firm handshake and will certainly be missed by those who were blessed to know him.

Those left behind to cherish his memory are his wife of 56 years, Truman Walker Whittington of Decatur; his two daughters, Kimberly Elizabeth Nugent of Louisiana and Delores Whittington and Regi of Decatur; his son, Arin Whittington and wife, Jennifer, of New Mexico; four grandchildren, Devin Nugent and wife, Millicent, Jerod Nugent, Peyton Nugent and Adam Whittington; his sister, Connie Jean Whittington Henley and husband, Ronald; and numerous nieces, nephews and a host of friends.