



## Clifford Ray Gates

March 25, 1935 - March 21, 2019

Clifford R. Gates left his loving family on this earth to be reunited with other loved ones in heaven just five days before his 84th birthday in the early morning hours of March 21st, 2019. Cliff, the fifth of seven siblings, was born on March 25th, 1935 to James Lewis and Ora Jane (Freeman) Gates on the family farm near Okfuskee Community where he lived most of his life. He loved his family, the St Louis Cardinals and anything with an OU on the uniform...we sometimes wonder if that is the correct order. After attending Okfuskee Grade School (where he told stories of talking to German prisoners of war through the fence) and Nuyaka High School (where he excelled in sports), he was invited to join the United States Army where he met his wife of 59+ years, Sylvia (Estrada) Gates at Fort Riley, KS after volunteering to meet the incoming WACS (Woman's Army Corp) at the train station and carry their luggage back to the base. Cliff had a passion for sports from an early age, naming all the farm cats after popular baseball players. As a pitcher in High School, he caught the attention of a baseball scout after striking out many opponents...not sure exactly how many as the number seemed to grow through the years...and was invited to a pro try-out camp. He inherited his love for the St Louis Cardinals from his father, which has been passed down two generations and counting. Cliff suffered a serious farming accident in 1961 that claimed part of his right leg and left hand, but the Lord gave him and Sylvia an additional 58 great years together (for which his youngest two children are especially grateful). After attending Okmulgee Tech for an accounting degree, he tried to be a city slicker in Tulsa, Bixby, and Broken Arrow while working for Chief Freight Lines. However, as they say, "you can take the boy out of the farm but..." so he bought the family homestead and Sylvia became a real life Green Acres wife while he raised field crops, pecans (his favorite), and cattle. Cliff was preceded in death by two twin boys (Clifford and Alan) who died in childbirth, his parents, his oldest sister (Ruby Beasley), and an older brother (Leroy), and one niece (Kim Rash). He is survived by Sylvia, one older sister (Dorothy Tierney), his oldest brother (James), younger sisters (Kathryn Rash and Betty Heady), ten nephews, and five nieces. His surviving children and their spouses and grandchildren are Roger & Julie Gates, Wesley and Marie Gates & Joe Beard; Kenneth & Leasa Gates, Ashley & Brian Hinshaw; Jessica Jennings; Dylan & Jessica Gates, Alyssa Brimer, and Patrick Gates; Melissa & Darrell Crow and Zachery

Crow and Jennifer Bennett. Great grandchildren are Harlan and Hailey Hinshaw, Aurora Cowsar and Eddie Fowler, Aubrie Beard and Robert Wesley Beard due to arrive in August.

# Cemetery

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## Okfuskee Cemetery

Okfuskee, OK,

# Events

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**MAR 22** **Family will greet friends** 05:00PM - 08:00PM

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Parks Brothers Funeral Home

301 N 3rd Street, Okemah, OK, US, 74859

**MAR 23** **Service** 02:00PM

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Parks Brothers Funeral Home Chapel

301 N. Third, Okemah, OK, US

# Comments

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“ A tribute video has been added.



**Parks Brothers Funeral Home** - March 22 at 07:11 PM

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“ 58 files added to the album LifeTributes



**Parks Brothers Funeral Home** - March 22 at 05:38 PM



“ Cliff and Sylvia have always been like my aunt and uncle. I love them both dearly and always will. Thank you both for all the love and life you have shared with me and my family. Praying for strength and comfort through these difficult times! Love you all! Julia “Austin” Bell!

**julia Bell** - March 22 at 07:54 PM

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“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Clifford Ray Gates.



March 22 at 05:24 PM