



Donald Eugene Byars

July 13, 1942 - December 21, 2025

Donald Eugene Byars, 83, of Mt. Vernon, passed away at 6:00 a.m., Sunday, December 21, 2025, at GreenTree Assisted Living, in Mt. Vernon, Illinois.

He was born July 13, 1942, in Kell, Illinois, the son of Wallace and Fay (McMeen) Byars. On July 23, 1966, he married Beverly Wilson, and she preceded him in death in May of 1995. On May 2, 1998, in Mt. Vernon, he married Jane Alice Latta, and she survives.

Don's life was marked by humility, faith, courage, and a deep commitment to serving God, his family, and his community. He was always ready with a helping hand, hammer, or chain saw. He utilized his skills to help others, whether it was fixing a roof, trimming a tree, or tweaking a garage door. He retired from Kell Volunteer Fire Department after 25 years, and fulfilled many roles there, including Assistant Chief. As a lifelong member of Panther Fork Baptist Church, he served as Treasurer, Clerk, and also served on several building committees.

Don accrued many titles, including "Loudest Fan" at his Grandkids' ballgames, "Official Can-Fix-Anything Guy", "Neighborhood Wildlife Feeder and Moderator", and the founder of the Peanut Butter Makes Everything Better club. He was a connoisseur of custard pie, banana pudding, and Coca-Cola. Always ready with a smile and a joke, his kindness and love will be missed by all.

In addition to his wife, Jane Byars of Mt. Vernon, he is survived by a daughter, Karen Byars Roth of Aviston, Illinois; two sons, John Burge (Leann) of Mt. Vernon, and Chris Burge (Sheila) of Mt. Vernon; step-children, Crystal Hefner (Jeff) of Harrisburg, Illinois, and Russell Bishop of Carrier Mills, Illinois; grandchildren, Andrew Burgin (Sherrie), Alyssa Spicuzza (Tanner), Aaron Burge (Kelsey), Nathan Roth, Reagan Roth, Lane Bond (Kalyn), Connor Burge (Lyndsey), Colton Burge (Miranda), Breanna Hefner (Sean), and Dylan Hefner; great-grandchildren, Trey and Teigan Spicuzza, Oliver and Louise Burge, Maggie and Junie Burge, and Kouvr Bond; sister, Shirley (Byars) Wilson and husband Max of Dix; brother-in-law, Steve Smith of Mt. Vernon; sister-in-law, Sarah Lou (Wilson) Bicknell of Mt. Vernon; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, Beverly (Wilson) Byars; daughter, Cheryl Lynn Bond; brother, William Floyd Byars; and sister, Phyllis Ann (Byars) Smith.

Funeral services for Mr. Byars will be held at 12:00 p.m. (noon), Friday, December 26,

2025, at Panther Fork Baptist Church, with Rev. John Ashby officiating. Burial will follow at Panther Fork Cemetery. Visitation will be held Friday, December 26, 2025, from 10:00 a.m., until the hour of service, at the church. Memorial gifts may be made to the Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation, or the Panther Fork Cemetery Fund, and will be accepted at the service, or by mail to the Osborn Funeral Home, P.O. Box 130, Dix, Illinois 62830. Online condolences may be made at www.osbornfuneral.com, or on the Osborn Funeral Home Facebook page.

Cemetery Details

Panther Fork Cemetery

Texico, IL 62889

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 26. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Panther Fork Baptist Church
22224 N Tolle Ln
Texico, IL 62889

Funeral Service

DEC 26. 12:00 PM (CT)

Panther Fork Baptist Church
22224 N Tolle Ln
Texico, IL 62889

Tribute Wall

KB

“ So very sorry for your loss Jane. Sending thoughts and prayers.

Kathy m Bridgwater - December 27, 2025 at 09:46 AM

SG

“ Scott Karen, Brian, Jodi Gina planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Eugene Byars.

Scott Karen, Brian, Jodi Gina - December 24, 2025 at 09:04 PM

SG

“ Scott Karen, Brian, Jodi Gina purchased the Serene Reflections Bouquet for the family of Donald Eugene Byars.



Scott Karen, Brian, Jodi Gina - December 24, 2025 at 09:04 PM

JP

“ Sorry for your loss, Jane.

jeff parker - December 24, 2025 at 09:08 AM

MH

“ Betty and I were so very sorry to hear of Don's passing. He and Jane were the best neighbors anyone could have. Don was always ready to lend a tool or helping hand to cut up a fallen limb or blade snow off our driveway. We will miss him dearly.

Merle & Betty Hollmann - December 23, 2025 at 11:04 PM

DJ

“ *It is with sincere sympathy that we extend our condolences for your loss. We pray that you will find healing, comfort and peace through our Lord Jesus Christ who loves you beyond measure!*

Death is something we will all encounter and if we don't make a decision now before we die, about giving our lives to Him, we will face serious consequences for rejecting Him and His love for us, after our departure from this world. Jesus paid a tremendous price for us by taking the wrath of God on the cross, on our behalf, for our sins and rebellion against God. God, being our Creator, sent Jesus, His Son, to lay down His life for us, so we would never have to face God's eternal judgement once we leave this earth. Death is not the end for any of us. We will all live on, but where is determined by whether or not we surrender our lives to the Lordship of Jesus Christ who is the only way to God the Father and to our salvation from sin, death and destruction. Jesus is only a prayer away. A simple prayer like "Lord Jesus, I believe you are God's Son who He sent to pay the price for my mistakes, sins, and rebellion against God. Please forgive me for all I have done in rebelling against you, Lord.

I now give and surrender my life to you and ask that you be my Lord and Savior. Thank you for saving me from God's eternal judgement and allowing me to now be a part of you and your royal family forever. In your name, I pray. Amen. " God bless you and keep you always during this hour of your grief. I pray you will realize that you're never alone when you're in Christ Jesus. His Word guarantees us He will never leave or forsake us.

DJ - December 22, 2025 at 08:39 PM

JB

“ *3 files added to the tribute wall*



John Burge - December 22, 2025 at 08:42 AM

JB

Don got the biggest smile on his face when he walked around the corner and realized what his birthday surprise was going to be. I am going to miss you and your smile.

John Burge - December 22, 2025 at 08:57 AM