



## Wardell Eugene Jenkins

February 6, 1922 - October 7, 2015

Wardell Eugene Jenkins was born February 6, 1922 in Lincoln, Nebraska to Walter Gerald and Eva Mae (Magee) Jenkins. He joined brother LeRoy, and was followed by Geraldine, Walter, Elmer and Darlene, all of whom greeted his arrival in heaven.

He joined the National Guard in San Diego, CA at age 17, in 1939. He was called into service by the US Army. In 1940 (his unit, the 251st C/A Artillery) was shipped out to Hawaii where they were assigned to build Camp Malakole near Barbers Point. He was in the chow line on December 7th 1941 when Pearl Harbor was bombed. He shot a Japanese plane down with his rifle and was thereafter known as "Trigger". He was away from his family for 4 years while serving in Fiji, Guadalcanal, and Bougainville. While in Bougainville as a Searchlight Control Chief, and about to be overrun by 15,000 Japanese soldiers during the night, he organized the searchlight crews to turn on their searchlights in unison reflecting off the water-filled clouds to illuminate the enemy without giving away the position of U.S. soldiers, turning the tide on that battle. This is recounted in the book "Bougainville: The Forgotten Campaign" by Harry Gailey. He was a Sergeant in Battery A, 396th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion when discharged on November 23, 1944.

He returned to California and later moved to Elmira, Oregon with his family. When he learned that his former Nebraska classmate, Frances Elizabeth Pratt, was living in Portland and visiting her parents in Corvallis, OR, he drove up to reconnect with her. They stayed up all night talking and were married in

Corvallis June 10th 1945.

Wardell & Frances welcomed a daughter, Karen a year later followed by son, Richard in 1949 and another daughter, Patricia, in 1951.

Wardell worked as a logger, highway department maintenance worker and contractor. He was also involved with the construction of Elmira Church of Christ's new building.

He worked in Alpine, Wyoming in the mid '60's, eventually marrying Zola Hill and expanding his family with her 4 children, Glayde, Vern, Carol and Don. He was a founding father of Alpine Civic Center and co-founder of Jenkins Building Supply with his son, Richard. He was active in the VFW, serving as State Commander for a time and also a member of the American Legion.

Work projects and later retirement would take him to St. George, Utah during the winters where he discovered his passion for golf. He still holds the course record for 38 tournament holes-in-one and twice got two in one day. He also loved playing pinochle and continued to play until his last week on earth. Hunting, fishing and gardening (especially potatoes), were activities he enjoyed wherever he lived and worked.

Two years ago he sought lower elevation and moved in with his daughter, Karen & her husband Mike Bernard in St. Paul, Oregon, where he spent many hours watching the birds and squirrels in their yard and playing pinochle. He was a member of Newberg Christian Church.

He was blessed with nine grandchildren and thirty two great-grandchildren. Wardell passed away October 7, 2015 and will go to his final earthly resting place in Etna, Wyoming.

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

OCT **10**. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (PT)

Northwest Christian Church  
2315 Villa Rd  
Newberg, OR 97132  
(503) 538-3104

# Tribute Wall

DW

“ *My sweet Uncle Wardy.  
He waited for his baby sister, my Mom to pass first, said he was waiting to be the last to go. My Mom, Eva Darlene Jenkins Wright passed July 3, 2015.  
Uncle Wardy passed 3 months after. He was a great and courageous man...he shall never be forgotten, dearly loved, Debra Wright*

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**Debra Wooten Wright** - July 17, 2020 at 01:05 AM