



Paul Dean Brown

March 11, 1934 - September 15, 2024

Paul Brown passed away September 15, 2024, at the age of 90 in Bartlesville Oklahoma, his home since 1976. His children, Nancy, Debbie and Doug were with him during the day to say good-bye.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 67 years, Sharon (Sherie) Brown, parents Bentley and Julia Brown, brother James Brown and granddaughter Kylie McFeeters.

He is survived by his sister Lynnette Groh; children: Nancy Williams (Kent), Debbie McFeeters, Doug Brown (Marilyn); grandchildren: Drew McFeeters, Dylan and Keaton Brown, Madeline Aguillard, Colson, Camon and Carter Williams; and great-grandchildren: Matthew, Marshall, Kassidy, Makenna, Preston and Afton.

Paul was born March 11, 1934, in Peoria, Illinois, where he lived until 1942 when the family moved to Monroe, LA for two years during WWII. The family returned to Terre Haute, IN when the war ended, where Paul lived until graduating from Honey Creek HS in 1952. Paul always had an outgoing personality, and he had a wide circle of friends in the bustling post war community that resulted in many fond memories and good friends that endured for the rest of his life. It was probably during this period that Paul realized that good friends are one of the keys to a happy life, and he made of

point of keeping in touch with the friends he made during all the subsequent phases of his life.

After he graduated high school, he moved to Urbana, Illinois to attend the University of Illinois and received a BS in Agriculture in 1956. During this period, he started dating Sharon who had also attended Honey Creek HS, and they were married February 1954. Paul had to balance the responsibilities of his new family, attending classes, studying and working part time, but he often said that the discipline and structure of his new life helped him focus on efficiently completing his course work and learn the multi-tasking skills he would rely on later in life. If studying between shifts at the Steak & Shake weren't hard enough, in Oct. 1955 their son Doug was born during his senior year.

Paul had an early interest in farming that included spending summers during high school working on his uncle's farm, and after graduating from U of I he planned to move to a farm in Illinois. While he waited for the land to become available, he worked in Chicago for a short time doing research in food safety and preservation. After Debbie was born in December 1957, the family moved to a small farm that his grandfather acquired in the late 1800's near Peoria, Illinois. As was typical for small farms in central Illinois, Paul planted corn, oats, wheat and soybeans for feed and cash, and raised hogs typically getting up before sunrise to feed the animals stock before taking the four-share plow or four row combine to work the approximately 300 acres of crops. This was exhausting and time-consuming work, but again Paul was soon good friends with the neighbors and integral part of the farming community between Wyoming and Princeville. He made time to be on the school board for the K-8 grade, 34 student country school, and somehow convinced Sharon to open a coffee shop featuring her favorite recipes on the enclosed spring porch of their farmhouse, so farmers bringing grain to the nearby elevator could get a homemade meal before returning to the fields. This was in addition to caring

for a new baby when Nancy was born in March of 1961. Paul would often say “My Mom didn’t raise no fool” and after seven rewarding but difficult years Paul and Sharon decided it was best to use his ag education and farming experience to work for businesses specializing in agricultural financing, which resulted in giving up the day-to-day farm responsibilities and moving off the farm in 1965.

Paul started working for John Hancock’s farm loan division in 1965 using his practical farming knowledge to evaluate loan applications for land, equipment, livestock and improvements. The family moved to Streator, Illinois, and Paul travelled around the state several days each week appraising farms and learning how the financial institutions work in the farming industry. Paul was a fast learner and soon the company asked Paul to expand the company’s operations in Oklahoma, and the family moved to Oklahoma City in August 1968. It was a busy time for work and family and Paul was often travelling, but he still found time to attend many of the kid’s activities like track meets, tennis matches, piano recitals, scout meetings and church functions. Paul was also avid card player, and life in mid-America during the late 60’s and early 70’s before computers, cell phones and 100’s of TV channels allowed time for many Saturday nights playing bridge with other couples and listening to Herb Albert or Al Hurt records.

The Oklahoma City years ended as Doug and Debbie went off to college and John Hancock shut down the farm loan division in 1976. There was certainly still a need for agricultural financing and a regional bank in Bartlesville, OK asked Paul to start and lead their new ag lending department. The family now down to three, moved to Bartlesville in March 1976, and there on a quiet cul-de-sac they built their home for the next 48 years. Although Paul and Sharon enjoyed activities with the many friends in B’ville, they both loved to travel, and after Nancy left for college in 1979, they would hop in the car for trips

across the US. When Paul retired from the bank in 1995, he would take motorcycle trips with his old high school friends, drift down the Arkansas River in his small ski boat with co-workers turned friends from the pool and card club in B'ville and always take several trips to Colorado in the winter to downhill ski. He often said there wasn't anything better than making sweeping turns down a ski run high in the mountains under a blue sky. He was a passionate skier from the age of 37 until his last run at the age of 82.

He was very proud of his children and supported and encouraged them to be independent even when it was difficult to see them struggle through all the ups and down in their lives. He was satisfied with the simple pleasures in life like a drive in his convertible, finding a good BBQ place with a cold beer, and sharing one of his many funny stories. He worked hard but kept it in perspective by always making time to play a game with the grandkids, make another lap around the lake in the boat or drive all day to help someone out of a jam. He didn't seek the spotlight but didn't hesitate to stand up when he saw someone being treated unfairly. He was friendly with a great sense of humor, but didn't like people that were phonies in which case he pulls out one of his many midwestern sayings such as "He is all hat and no horse". It was a life well lived, and he will be deeply missed by his family and his many friends.

Per his request, no service is planned at this time, but his family is planning a simple gathering to share memories of his life in a few months.

Spending time with family and friends was one of Paul's great joys, so in lieu of flowers please do something special with your family be it a quiet dinner, helping your favorite charity or a community service project. Please send any cards for the family to Nancy Williams, 312 Hollowdale, Edmond, OK 73003.

Tribute Wall

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“ I am so sorry for the family’s loss of Uncle Paul’s physical presence. I’m trying to remember a situation or time when he didn’t care, but I can’t. He was always interested and supportive, absolutely dedicated to his family, always asking about my living circumstances, relationships, work, and animals; the last time I saw him, at his home in Bartlesville, he sent me home with several copies of *Western Horseman*, knowing I would find them useful and enjoy them. Who knows what he and his treasured Sherie will be up to now!

Shelley Brown - September 20, 2024 at 05:51 PM