



Jerald Wayne Sanders

November 16, 1937 - August 12, 2024

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Before you read this obituary, fill a glass with your favorite beverage, find a comfortable spot, and think of something that makes you laugh. This story isn't just about saying goodbye - it's intended to celebrate a life well-lived. We hope you will chuckle as we tell you about a funny man who lived 86 years in the Turlock community and did his part to make the world a better place.

Jerald "Jerry" Wayne Sanders passed peacefully at home on Monday, August 12th, with his wife of 47 years, Carolyn, by his side.

If you're a Turlock Bulldog class of '57, a local farmer who enjoyed a card game at the Farmer's Den, or one of his golfing buddies at TGCC, then you know Jerry was a character. With a funny story, a wild antic, or one of his signature phrases, Jerry had a way of keeping life interesting.

Jerry's story began during the Great Depression. The Sanders Family had been in the United States for over 100 years, and after losing the family farm in Grinnell, Iowa, they began migrating to California. Jerry's parents, Inez Mae and Lyman Andrew Sanders moved to Ceres in 1934 and bought a small farm where they raised their family. The 30-acre farm cost \$8,000, and they didn't know how they would ever pay for it; the home ranch remains in the family

today. Jerry, their fifth child, was born November 16, 1937, in Modesto. Jerry adored his older siblings, James (Marian), Catherine Rogers (Don), Alan (Marlene), and Clifford (Arlene). We are grateful Uncle Clifford was able to say goodbye to his baby brother and urge him to join their siblings in Heaven.

As a child, Jerry was known for his beautiful, curly black hair—so much so that people often mistook him for a girl! Although he was small in stature, Jerry never allowed his size to hold him back from athletics or hard work. Jerry remembered fondly swimming in the canal, playing the trombone at Keyes Elementary School, and watching his brother Jim fly over the family ranch from his chair on the roof of their barn.

A favorite time of Jerry's life was attending Turlock High School, where he played football, both offense and defense, for the Bulldogs. Jerry made friends in high school that he cherished throughout his life. After high school, Jerry attended Modesto Junior College, graduating in 1959, and then joined the inaugural class of Stanislaus State University, when classes were held at the fairgrounds.

In search of a career, Jerry started butchering livestock for local ranchers on the family farm in Ceres, eventually opening Sanders Meat and Locker Plant in Turlock in 1970.

Jerry married Margaret Ritchey in 1965, and they had two children, Ellen Way (Mike) and Spencer Sanders (Stacey).

Jerry met Carolyn Nutcher at the Sanders Family bicentennial celebration, where Carolyn and her children were guests. The couple married in 1976, and Jerry joined Carolyn on her dairy farm in Denair. The couple eventually bought a new dairy on the west side, and Jerry made many new friends there. Jerry enjoyed his life with Carolyn's children: Mike Nutcher (Darcy), Rick Nutcher

(Debbie), and Sandy McDonald (T.J.). The couple has nine grandchildren: Trevor Natcher (Erin), Katie Van Vliet (Dustin), Kayla Scully (Tim), Casey Pearson (Drew), Courtney Lira (Fernie), Robyn Hilton (Tyler), Clayton McDonald (Blayne), Julia Way and Elizabeth Way. The family has been blessed with 18 great-grandchildren. He also leaves behind many beloved nieces and nephews.

Jerry spent his life making deals and helping others. He loved transforming neglected land into productive farms. His hard work and dedication have left a lasting legacy, now cared for by his grateful children. Jerry was a longtime member of Ceres Lions Club and was president in 1972. He also loved youth sports, refereeing high school football, basketball, and baseball games for 20 years. One of Jerry's great loves was the game of golf; he encouraged Carolyn to pick up the game, and they played in many tournaments together. Jerry never planned to retire, but illness forced him to settle down in 2018 at the age of 80. Carolyn lovingly cared for Jerry until his death, and he was grateful for her patience and kindness.

We could fill pages with funny stories from Jerry's life, and we hope his friends and family find comfort in their personal memories. If you were one of his many friends, please know he loved and cherished each of you. In Jerry's memory, we encourage you to do something kind for someone in need or donate to your favorite charity.

Our family is grateful for the wonderful medical professionals at Memorial Hospital, Seva Hospice, and Legacy Home Health for their excellent care.

Join us in celebrating Jerry's life on Thursday, August 29, at 2:00 PM at Turlock Funeral Home. A reception will follow at Denair Community Center. The family welcomes all those touched by Jerry's life to attend.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

AUG **29**. 2:00 PM (PT)

Turlock Funeral Home
425 North Soderquist Road
Turlock, CA 95381
(209) 632-9111
<https://turlockfuneralhome.com>

Reception

AUG **29**. 3:30 PM (PT)

Denair Community Center
3850 N Gratton Rd.
Denair, CA 95316

Tribute Wall

JS

“ *Janeen sanders purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Jerald Wayne Sanders.*



Janeen sanders - August 29, 2024 at 01:20 PM

LN

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with your family.*

Lee & Cindy Newsome - August 29, 2024 at 12:44 PM

MV

Sorry to hear about Jerry. My thoughts are with you Carolyn and family. We had a few great laughs together. Golf trips I'll never forget.

Melodie Venn - August 30, 2024 at 02:18 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Jerald Wayne Sanders.*



August 26, 2024 at 09:26 AM

KF

“ *Kim & Dick, Brook, Caitlyn & Families purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Jerald Wayne Sanders.*



Kim & Dick, Brook, Caitlyn & Families - August 17, 2024 at 06:32 PM

KM

“ *What a fun Uncle! My mom Cathryn, his older sister adored him. I remember as a kid while visiting the family ranch where he started Sanders meat. He would let me turn the handle on the meat grinder for hamburger. My family lives here and there are so many great memories. Carolyn, Ellen and Spencer my heart goes out to you for your dad's passing. He was awesome ❤️*

kim Morehart - August 15, 2024 at 01:10 PM

CB

“ *Jerry was always a fun guy. I remember golfing years ago with him and he always had me laughing during our golf tournaments. He was one of fastest THS Football guys. RIP Funny guy!*

Carol Bettincourt-McRoberts - August 15, 2024 at 12:27 PM