



## Mr. LaVern "Vern" Balk

June 16, 1941 - December 11, 2016

LaVern "Vern" Joseph Balk, 75, passed away December 11, 2016. Vern was born at home on his family's farm near Waucoma, Iowa. He was the middle of nine children born to Herman and Madonna (Finnegan) Balk. After high school graduation, Vern joined the United States Navy where he was stationed in Japan, Hawaii, and California. He then attended the University of Northern Iowa where he graduated with a degree in business and marketing and met his wife of 50 years, Jeanne Graff.

Vern and Jeanne settled in Ankeny, Iowa, and to this union three children were born. Vern worked at the Principal Financial Group for 37 years. He was a 4th degree member of the Knights of Columbus and an avid sports fan. Vern loved his family, taking annual road trips to visit relatives. He will always be remembered for his welcoming personality, his frequent inquiries regarding the dating status for those yet unbetrothed, and his competitive whooping and hollering while routing any young nephew or grandchild in ping-pong, pool, or basketball. He was a good dancer, kept a meticulous lawn, proudly showcased his family photo albums, and always took the grandkids to the park.

Vern was preceded in death by his parents, brother Mark, sister Barbara Newton, and brother-in-law Bill Newton. He is survived by his wife, Jeanne, children: Steve (Angie), Julie (Brian) Wiltshire, and Sherri (Adrian) Garza, 11

grandchildren: Evan, Amelia, Clarissa, & Kyle Balk, Owen & Landon Wiltshire, Scarlett, Drake, Bridget, Luke & Jack Garza, siblings: Madonna (Dave) Baker, Jimmy (Cathy) Balk, Marie (Irvin) Blong, Charlie (Diane) Balk, Delores (Dennis) Puffer, Judy (Bill) Melcher, sister-in-law Janice Balk, and many nieces and nephews.

Memorial contributions will be used for Mass intentions for Vern or given to OLIH's Knights of Columbus.

# Cemetery Details

## Ankeny Memorial Gardens Cemetery

4208 N Ankeny Blvd  
Ankeny, IA

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 15. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Catholic Church  
510 East First Street  
Ankeny, IA

## Prayer Service

DEC 15. 7:00 PM - 7:30 PM (CT)

Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Catholic Church  
510 East First Street  
Ankeny, IA

## Mass of Christian Burial

DEC 16. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Catholic Church  
510 East First Street  
Ankeny, IA



# Tribute Wall

DA

“ Julie,  
*I heard about your dad this morning, and I am so sorry for your loss.  
May God be with you, and your family.*  
Danelle Ott

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**Danelle** - December 16, 2016 at 10:12 AM

DO

“ Jeanne,  
  
*My deepest sympathies in the loss of Vern. He was a true gentleman, who always had such kinds words for everyone...such a kind and gentle soul. Now, he's making Heaven laugh with his good sense of humor!*

*My best memories of Vern are playing with him in the Knights of Columbus golf league and riding with him to KC District meetings. He was so much fun to be around--his humor was contagious!*

*Vern will be missed...now it's God's turn to take care of him.*

*Daniel Ossian  
Ankeny*

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**Daniel Ossian** - December 16, 2016 at 09:40 AM

FC

“ *Jeanne and family:*

*Frank and I are so sorry for the loss of your dear husband and father.*

*Frank spoke highly of Vern during the years the two worked closely with each other at Principal Financial. Frank spoke of his work ethic and sense of humor. We're so sorry that his dementia took over so young in his life, leaving him - and you, unable to really enjoy your retirement years.*

*We're sorry we have 2 commitments we can't get out of for the visitation and the funeral. We called to see when the earliest we could come and nothing seem to work.*

*Please accept our deepest sympathy in the loss of your husband. I'm glad I got to call after the Principal Christmas party as we missed seeing the both of you there. I could tell that it wouldn't be long for Vern at that time.*

*God bless you and family and I'm sending a card to the home.  
Frank and Ellen Celsi*

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**Frank and Ellen Celsi** - December 14, 2016 at 10:25 AM



“ *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Mr. LaVern "Vern" Balk.*



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December 13, 2016 at 11:10 AM

JD

“ *Jeanne, I am so sorry for your loss. We were fellow bus passengers on the Ankeny commuter bus (until you retired) and we see each other in church. I knew Vern because I worked in the area where he worked and had occasion to speak with him about business issues. May God's comforting arms surround you and give you peace.*

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**Julie Davis** - December 13, 2016 at 09:37 AM

EW

“ *To the Balk Family, With sympathy from a classmate. Ken and Elaine (Korzendorfer) Wurzer*

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**Elaine Wurzer** - December 13, 2016 at 09:25 AM

DO

“ *Dear Jeanne and all of your children and Young Adults. May God bring comfort to each of you as needed. Will always cherish the memories this way. The Balk softball games and the Mabes Pizza Parties. and the Family get together. A very neat person who told a story and made each Day Better for all of us. God will be with Each & everyone you.*



*Hugs and Lots of Prayers your way!!! Craig&Donna Burke, Jeremy ,Joshua, Jordan.*

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**Donna** - December 12, 2016 at 04:31 PM

DM

“ *Debra Ott Moller lit a candle in memory of Mr. LaVern "Vern" Balk*



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**Debra Ott Moller** - December 12, 2016 at 03:19 PM