



## Karl H. Lawrenz

September 13, 1929 - June 7, 2020

Karl-Heinz Lawrenz of Highland, IL, passed away Sunday morning, June 7, at Anderson Hospital after an extended illness. He was 90 years old. A private funeral service will be held on Friday, June 12, in the chapel of Spengel-Boulanger Funeral Home in Highland. Pastor Rob Kirbach of Highland First Baptist will officiate. Private burial will be in Highland City Cemetery.

Karl was born in Pomerania (Germany) in 1929. His family endured many hardships during WWII, not the least of which was Karl's being captured by Russian troops when he was 14, and having to spend 8 months in a Russian prisoner-of-war camp in Siberia. Conditions there were horrible-extreme cold, disease, abuse, horrors of every kind. Karl barely survived. However, nothing-not even that experience-could daunt his loving nature and sense of humor. Because of the conditions in the camp, he developed TB and had to recuperate, post-war, in a sanatorium, which turned out to be a blessing in disguise. There he met his future wife, Inge, with whom he spent 50 happy years prior to her death in 2004.

While still in Germany, Karl and Inge had two daughters-Marita and Karin. When the girls were still toddlers, they decided to emigrate to the United States for a better life. In 1959, they came to Highland to join other members of their family who had emigrated the previous year. Karl quickly found work at Basler Electric, and worked there until his retirement. Shortly after retiring, he went to work part-time at the Highland Walmart as a greeter-the perfect job for someone with his outgoing, sociable nature-and continued to work there until health issues intervened.

So that his story would not be lost to future generations, in 2012, he published his life story, entitled *Gulag #7*, which was available for a time from Amazon.com.

Karl was always friendly and positive with the best smile, and had a seemingly unending repertoire of sayings, short poems, jokes and puns (mostly in German) that he would consistently drop into conversations to the delight of his listeners. Everyone who met him,

loved him.

Most importantly, he was a loving and caring son, husband, father, grandfather, son-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, and uncle; an excellent and respected employee; and a devoted member of the First Baptist Church of Highland where he served as an usher and, for a while, part-time custodian.

Karl was preceded in death by his parents, Albert and Margarete (nee Czemper) Lawrenz; his loving wife, Inge S. (nee Driesner); and his sister, Elfriede Kubeit, in Germany, Sister In-Laws, Therese C. Boyd, Renate I. Mikoleit, Dorothea Thiems and Brother In-Law - Egon H. Driesner.

He is survived by his two daughters, Marita Bennink of Canada and her husband Ben; Karin McMullen of Highland and her husband Pat; a sister Gisela Zelle and brother Siegfried Lawrenz of Germany;

Grandchildren -

Jennifer (Patrick) Morris, Sandy (Desmond) Janes,  
Luke (Jennifer) Bennink,  
Cody (Significant Other Christina) Bennink,  
Katie (Fiance - Andrew Muncaster) Bennink,  
Michael L. (Brianna) Jacober, Daniel K. Jacober,  
Andrew D. (Significant Other Keri Henschen) Jacober,  
Shawn (Jennifer) McMullen, Jason McMullen,  
Jennifer (Donnie) Clark

Great Grandchildren -

Jacob, Addyson, Faith, Michael, Nicholas, Hailey,  
Alyssa, Owen, Sawyer, Samuel, Elsa, Alexander,  
Mackenzie, Lillie, Rowan, Alden, Liam and Declan

Sister In-Law - Margit R. Lange, Highland, IL

Brother In-Law - Manfred H. (Linda) Driesner, Highland, IL

Sister In-Law - Hildegard M. Ullmann, Los Angeles, CA

Brother In-Law - Arnold G. (Cindy) Driesner, Edwardsville, IL

Brother In-Law - Horst L. (Barbara) Driesner, Edwardsville, IL

Many - Nieces and Nephews.

Karl was a dear, sweet man who was a blessing to all who knew him. He will be sorely missed.

Memorials may be made to The First Baptist Church of Highland or Meals on Wheels in

care of Spengel-Boulanger Funeral Home, PO Box 187, 1501 9th St, Highland, IL 62249.  
(Please make check payable to the organization, thank you)

# Tribute Wall



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Jay Boulanger - June 12, 2020 at 03:06 PM

GA

“ GERLADINE I ALLEE purchased the Cheeseboard Complete for the family of Karl H. Lawrenz.



GERLADINE I ALLEE - June 11, 2020 at 03:57 PM

MA

“ Sincere sympathies to all his family. Karl was a kind and gentle man, he was a wonderful neighbor for 45 years. I will always remember he and Tom talking over the fence and sometimes having a beer together! And I will never forget the hugs over the fence from my dear sweet neighbor. Rest in Peace Karl and God Bless You and all your Family!!

Mary Auer

Mary Auer - June 10, 2020 at 06:04 PM

LE

“ Lisa Early purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Karl H. Lawrenz.



Lisa Early - June 10, 2020 at 01:07 PM

PP

“ Mr. Lawrence was a very nice person, and he will be missed. I always enjoyed his upbeat manner when I went into Wal Mart. A jovial man he was !!!!!

Pastor Pye - June 09, 2020 at 06:07 PM

GA

“ Karl was such a kind and gentile man. I treasure his autobiography in Gulag #7 and this book, will be my prized possession and I thank God for him. He was a tribute to Walmart as a greeter. I miss him so much and I am so thankful I had the privilege of knowing him.



Gary Adolph - June 09, 2020 at 02:52 PM

CG

“ We would like to extend our sympathy to the Lawrenz family. We both worked with Karl at Basler Electric and found him to be quite the story teller and a very kind person. You will all be in our thoughts and prayers. Connie and Marvin Grapperhaus

Connie Grapperhaus - June 09, 2020 at 12:19 PM

JN

“ We were sadden to hear of Karl's passing. Having our office next door to him we appreciated his sweetness, always greeting us with a smile and a morning greeting when we entered our office as he tended to his garden.

May your memories sustain you in this difficult time!

David Ziegler & Janet Nagel  
Ziegler Jacob Insurance Agency

Janet Nagel - June 09, 2020 at 10:56 AM



“ Ghirardelli Galore was purchased for the family of Karl H. Lawrenz.



June 09, 2020 at 10:09 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Karl H. Lawrenz.*



June 09, 2020 at 10:04 AM

CW

“ *My sympathy to Karl's family & friends. I worked with Karl at Walmart. He was a wonderful man and was always willing to help anyone. He will be missed.*

**Carole Wells** - June 08, 2020 at 11:44 PM

JW

“ *To the Family of Karl, you have my deepest sympathy. Such a fine man, I always enjoyed visiting with him, my last visit with him was about a year ago, it was special. May God wrap his loving arms around Karl and he may rest in peace.*  
*June Yann Williams*

**June Yann Williams** - June 08, 2020 at 11:10 PM

LT

“ *Lewis Terveen sent a virtual gift in memory of Karl H. Lawrenz*



**Lewis Terveen** - June 08, 2020 at 10:27 PM

LT

*Karl will always be remembered in my heart. He was a wonderful friend and employee when working for us at Wal-Mart.*

**Lewis Terveen** - June 08, 2020 at 10:32 PM

DW

*Marita and Family!! Please accept my sincere condolences on your dear father's passing!! Although I met him only once, I know he was a wonderful man, and he left a great impression on me!! May prayers and warm memories bring you comfort at this time. Sending all my love to you all! 🙏🌸❤️*

**Donna Walters** - June 09, 2020 at 04:16 AM

LT

“ *Lewis Terveen lit a candle in memory of Karl H. Lawrenz*



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**Lewis Terveen** - June 08, 2020 at 10:25 PM

CB

“ *My sympathy to Karl's family. I had several good conversations with Karl at Wal Mart. He was a good man and portrayed a touching story in his book.*  
*Carl Baumann*

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**Carl Baumann** - June 08, 2020 at 09:08 PM

SL

“ *Karl was one of the best greeters Wal-Mart ever had. He always had a smile and a kind word. Such a lovely gentleman. You were lucky to have him for so long.*

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**Shirley Lodes** - June 08, 2020 at 09:07 PM

JN

“ *So sorry to hear of Karl's passing. He was such a kind man. I delivered Meals on Wheels to him and always loved to hear one of his stories. Keeping you all in my thoughts and prayers.* Janet

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**Janet Nicolaides** - June 08, 2020 at 09:06 PM