



## Dr. Billy Joe LaRue

May 19, 1932 - March 8, 2015

Dr. Billy Joe La Rue, 82, died Sunday, March 8, 2015, at Neosho Memorial Regional Medical Center in Chanute, surrounded by his family.

Dr. La Rue was born May 19, 1932, in Iola, Kansas, the eldest son of Harold C. La Rue and Nellie (Anderson) La Rue. Dr. La Rue attended the 1st grade at Lincoln School, in Chanute. His father worked for the Ash Grove Cement Company, and when his job required him to maintain the company's pump house on the Neosho River north of Chanute, the family moved into the house on that property. Dr. La Rue then attended Neosho Valley School, a one-room schoolhouse across the road from the Ash Grove property, for grades 2-8. Upon graduation from Neosho Valley, he attended Royster Junior High (9th grade) and Chanute Senior High School, graduating in 1950.

Dr. La Rue attended Chanute Junior College (now Neosho County Community College) in 1951, before transferring to Kansas State College (now Kansas State University), Manhattan, Kansas, in the summer of 1951. He graduated from K-State in 1956 with Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degrees, and he was granted a license to practice veterinary medicine by the Kansas State Board of Veterinary Examiners.

Dr. La Rue married Barbara Ann Ebert on August 16, 1953, at the Evangelical United Brethren Church (now Otterbein United Methodist Church) in Chanute. Mrs. La Rue taught school at a one-room schoolhouse outside of Manhattan

while Dr. La Rue was attending the College of Veterinary Medicine at K-State. The veterinary college awarded her two honorary degrees -- "DVMMRS" and "PHT" (Put Hubby Through).

While a student at K-State, Dr. La Rue was a member of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps. He was commissioned a 1st Lieutenant, United States Army, upon his graduation. Dr. and Mrs. La Rue traveled to Chicago, Illinois, in August 1956, where, as a member of the Army's Veterinary Corps, Dr. La Rue attended the Army's Meat and Dairy Hygiene School for three months. Upon completion, the Army posted Dr. La Rue to Fort Benning, Georgia. In addition to inspecting and approving all food products entering the fort, Dr. La Rue provided veterinary care to the fort's war dogs and other animals on the premises. Dr. and Mrs. La Rue were able to travel through the South while Dr. La Rue was assigned to Fort Benning.

After fulfilling his active duty requirements with the Army, Dr. and Mrs. La Rue returned to Chanute, Kansas, in August 1958. Dr. La Rue and his laboratory partner from veterinary school, Dr. Don McReynolds, formed a partnership and opened Animal Medical Center in September 1958. Drs. La Rue and McReynolds practiced veterinary medicine together until Dr. La Rue's death. They received a proclamation from the Kansas Senate in 2014, honoring them for the longest continuous veterinary partnership in Kansas' history.

In order to provide continuing education and promote camaraderie among veterinarians in Southeast Kansas, Dr. La Rue helped found the Southeast Kansas Veterinary Medical Association. In order to be a better practitioner, he attended as many continuing education seminars as possible, and he spent many a night reading veterinary journals. Dr. La Rue also mentored many young veterinarians during his career. Dr. La Rue was named the "Veterinarian of the Year" by the Kansas Veterinary Medical Association for 1998. He received the KVMA's 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award. Local

legislators often sought Dr. La Rue's opinion on proposed legislation which might affect the practice of veterinary medicine in Kansas.

Dr. La Rue was active in his community. As a youth, he was a member of the Neosho Valley Busy Bees 4-H Club; as an adult, he taught classes for the club. When his oldest son joined Cub Scout Pack 100, Dr. La Rue became a leader. He served as Cubmaster of Pack 100 for many years, even after his sons had graduated into Boy Scout Troop 100. Dr. La Rue received Cub Scout leadership training at Philmont Scout Ranch, Cimarron, New Mexico, in July 1969. He returned to Philmont several times in the 1970s and 1980s as an adult leader for Explorer Post 100 when its members hiked through the Ranch as part of its High Adventure program.

Dr. La Rue was awarded the Scouter's Key in 1971. He completed Wood Badge Training in 1972. He received the Silver Beaver Award from the Quivira Council, Boy Scouts of America, in 1975. Dr. La Rue also served as the District Commissioner for the Heluska (now Osage Nation) District for many years in the 1970s, and later served as the Institutional Representative for Scouting for Otterbein United Methodist Church.

Dr. La Rue was a member of the Otterbein United Methodist Church, the Kansas Veterinary Medical Association, and a lifetime member of the K-State Alumni Association. He was a former member of the Chanute Kiwanis Club.

Dr. La Rue was a self-taught woodworker. Through practice and study, he went from "creating sawdust" to becoming well known as a skilled craftsman. He especially enjoyed creating and crafting items for his family, friends, and church.

Dr. La Rue was preceded in death by his parents and his two younger

brothers, R. Loyd La Rue and Robert J. La Rue. In addition to his beloved wife, Dr. La Rue is survived by his four children: Bruce La Rue and his wife, Gila; Brad La Rue and his wife, Carrie; and Brian La Rue, all of Chanute; and Beth Pruitt and her husband, Carl, of Hughes Springs, Texas. Dr. La Rue is also survived by six grandchildren: Kim La Rue, Chanute; Zach La Rue, Las Cruces, New Mexico; Jacob La Rue, Atchison, Kansas; Maggie La Rue, Manhattan, Kansas; and C.J. and Christine Pruitt, Hughes Springs, Texas; and one great-granddaughter, Novalee La Rue, Chanute.

Per Dr. La Rue's request, no visitation will be held. His funeral will be held at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, March 12, 2015, at Otterbein United Methodist Church, Chanute. The service will be led by Rev. Sang Hak Lee, with Gary Kilgore, Lay Leader, assisting. Burial will follow at Memorial Park Cemetery.

Countryside Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Because Dr. La Rue disliked suits and ties, his family requests attendees honor Dr. La Rue by wearing casual clothing – purple preferred. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions be made in Dr. La Rue's name to the Pet Tribute Program, K-State College of Veterinary Medicine, 103 Trotter Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506 -- 5604.

Countryside Funeral Home, Chanute, KS, is in charge of arrangements. On-line condolences may be left at [www.countrysidefh.com](http://www.countrysidefh.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Memorial Park Cemetery

E.. 14th St.  
Chanute, KS 66720

# Previous Events

## Service

MAR 12. 10:30 AM (CT)

Otterbein United Methodist Church  
631 W. 7th  
Chanute, KS 66720

# Tribute Wall

BP

“ I miss you daddy more that you know. Words don't even describe the emptiness I feel in my heart. Knowing I'll never hear you call me your Baby Daughter again is tearing me apart. I love you Daddy, and I hope you knew just how much I do. 😞😞



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**Beth Pruitt** - April 02, 2015 at 09:14 PM

MM

“ Marla Wilson And Misty lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue



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**Marla Wilson and Misty** - April 02, 2015 at 03:35 PM

RA

“ *Bill LaRue was a role model and mentor for me as a young man. When I was in high school (the 1970's) I was fortunate enough to work for Doctors LaRue & McReynolds. I cleaned cages and feed animals at their clinic.*



*I also knew Bill through the various scouting organizations he was involved with. Bill always let me off work on the weekends that I had a scouting activity. To all of Bill's family; please accept my sincere sympathy and personal condolences. I have many fond memories of Bill LaRue, and I am sure you do too.*

*Robert Scott Allen  
rscottallen@yahoo.com*

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**ROBERT SCOTT ALLEN** - March 31, 2015 at 03:43 PM

“ *Memories and how far reaching one person's life can be. Been spending a lot of time lately thinking about Daddy LaRue and praying for my LaRue Family. He was a fun loving, giving man who always had a smile on his face, ready with a joke or story, and loved his family and the community dearly. I was a frequent recipient of that love, for which I will always be grateful. Beth and I spent an evening before her folk's 50th wedding telling stories of our school days and enjoying many laughs with them, it is a memory that I will always cherish. He was also "my vet", and I tell that still to the vets here in OKC that care for my pets. My vet is Daddy LaRue, he knows my pets and he knows the best advice for them and me. When KiKi was sick and the surgery to heal him was going to be expensive, my Dad asked if there was a couch he could sleep on, Dr. LaRue said "no" and did the surgery. KiKi was with us many more years. When he did surgery on my sister's rottie, he told Dad that Bear would be in a kennel up front when he came to pick him up. Well, Daddy couldn't find Bear so he asked where he was - Dr. LaRue said "he didn't want to be in the kennel up front, he said he would stay in the back yard so we let him". When Midnight was sick here in OKC and I couldn't handle hearing the local vet, I had him call "my vet", and Daddy LaRue broke the news to me that I needed to take my kitty home, love him, and let him die in peace. I appreciated hearing it from someone that I knew loved me and knew what was best for me and my beloved kitty. I found out how far Dr. LaRue had reached out to my family when I was out to lunch with my 20 year old niece this past Monday. I told her of his passing and the first words out of her mouth were "is that the vet that saved Ariel (her diabetic kitty)? Yes, they had taken Ariel with them on a visit to her Grandma Carter in Altoona, KS. The kitty was sick so my sister took her to see our vet, Dr. LaRue who diagnosed her with diabetes and explained her care. I did not know previously that it had been him. Just one more jewel in the crown that he received in Heaven. A Tribute to a Great Man*

MH

“ Barbara and family, It seems to me I always knew the LaRue boys. My cousins Barbara Uden, McQuin and Genevive Jackson, Knight lived closest to the LaRue family and went to school with the LaRue's. Of course you and I Barbara grew up just blocks away from one another.

But we got to know Dr Bill best when we moved back to Chanute with 3 dogs, which we had the pleasure of having him treat all 3 with such kindness and knowledge. As time went on Dr Bill was able to help with their final days. He helped with such dignity of life, it made us feel comfortable with just what had to be done. Bill helped with a dog of questionabel parentage and such bad teeth, most vets would had said, " just put the dog to sleep". That dog was able to live for over 7 years bring us much enjoyment!

The entire Chanute area has lost a great man! He truly loved people and animals!

Barbara, you and your family are in our prayers and thoughts as you go on without Bill!

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**Marilyn and Carl Huffmaster** - March 12, 2015 at 02:40 PM

JJ

“ Jeffrey L Jordan lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue



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**Jeffrey L Jordan** - March 12, 2015 at 01:11 AM

JJ

*I've many happy memories of Explorers, friendship with all his children, and endless hospitality. My deepest sympathies to the entire family.*

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**Jeffrey L Jordan** - March 12, 2015 at 01:12 AM

BB

“ Deepest condolences from the entire Black family, friends and clients for 45 years. We are all so sad to see such a good man pass, but so very fortunate to have known him. What a kind person and such a talented veterinarian he was. Rest in peace, and Godspeed.

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**Bill Black** - March 11, 2015 at 10:39 PM

DL

“ There are so many memories of Uncle Bill and the family from the holidays and vacations we spent together. It would be hard to choose any one as they are all so special. You have a very loving family that will continue to grow even as Bill's life has ended. He will always be in our memories and the father figure that helped guide us. He lived a full life and helped everyone he could, that was the person that he was.

*Sincerely,*

*David LaRue*

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**David LaRue** - March 11, 2015 at 07:53 PM

GF

“ Gary And Debi Freeman lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue



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**Gary and Debi Freeman** - March 11, 2015 at 06:37 PM

AH

“ So sorry to hear of Dr. LaRue's passing. Prayers being lifted up for you Barbra and all you hold dearly that morn. Mom (Lela Hutchison) and I (Anita Hutchison) regret that we will be unable to attend the funneral. Know that you are all in our thoughts and prayers. Anita



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**Anita Hutchison** - March 11, 2015 at 02:06 PM

HR

“ My husband and I was so thankful we got a short visit to see Dr. LaRue and meet his wife and son and to share with Dr.LaRue that our dog Mugsy,that he worked so hard on for over two months to save his foot and we got to tell him he successfully accomplished just that and to thank him from the bottom of our hearts. Also to let him know the care also of the others at the clinic such a great team, all. His caring about not only our animals but of us also,is something we shall always remember. We will miss him so much. God be with you all. Prayers from Herb and Sherry Runer

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**Herb and Sherry Runer** - March 11, 2015 at 01:22 PM

TS

“ My family has had many visits to the Animal Medical Center over the years, some after hours too. Dr. LaRue was always very helpful and caring for all of our dogs. His famous 'Take 'em home and love 'em' was a great ending to any visit. I pray that fond memories may flood the mind's eye of family members and give you each peace. He will be missed by many.

*Steve, Tamara, Jeff and Amy Slane*

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**Tamara Slane** - March 11, 2015 at 12:21 PM



“ *Mystie Steward lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue*



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**Mystie Steward** - March 11, 2015 at 10:37 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue.*



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March 11, 2015 at 09:57 AM



“ *Kim Cooper lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue*



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**Kim Cooper** - March 11, 2015 at 09:18 AM



*Beth.. again Im so sorry for you loss and what a blessing he was and is to your family*

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**Kim Cooper** - March 11, 2015 at 09:19 AM

S(

“ Sue (McReynolds)menees lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue



Sue (McReynolds)menees - March 11, 2015 at 08:31 AM

CC

“ Corina Cox lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue



Corina Cox - March 10, 2015 at 11:01 PM

CC

The Cox and Barclay families send condolences to the La Rue. Dr La Rue was one of the good guys. Not only was he good with animals, but he was good with people as well. He will be deeply missed by many.

Corina Cox - March 10, 2015 at 11:04 PM

CH

“ Cynthia Harrison lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue

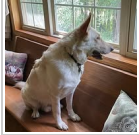


Cynthia Harrison - March 10, 2015 at 09:23 PM

CH

He was a wonderful and caring man, to humans and animals alike. He will be missed.

Cynthia Harrison - March 10, 2015 at 09:26 PM



“ *Teresa Frydendall lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue*



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**Teresa Frydendall** - March 10, 2015 at 09:14 PM

VC

*A prayer in memory of Dr. BILLY Joe LaRue.*

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**Virginia Crompton** - March 11, 2015 at 12:39 AM

TF

“ *The Stoll Family lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue*



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**The Stoll Family** - March 10, 2015 at 01:42 PM

TF

*The Stoll Family, Humboldt Kansas*

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**The Stoll Family** - March 10, 2015 at 01:44 PM

EL

“ I first met Dr. LaRue when he would come to the nursing home every weekend and sit for hours, just holding his mother's hand, talking calmly to her and loving her. I thought then, what a wonderful person he was inside. Later, he took care of many of my dogs, putting them to sleep when needed but willing to go the extra to try to save them when I was not ready to let go. Such a caring man and vet. Yes, I also remember the, "Take them home and love em" words. He will be so deeply missed, but I'm sure he is holding his mother's hand up in heaven now and not struggling any longer. Thank you Bill and to your family for sharing you with us.  
Walter and Evelyn Lacey

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**Evelyn Lacey** - March 10, 2015 at 11:38 AM

DD

“ Donna Dye lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue



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**Donna Dye** - March 10, 2015 at 10:03 AM

MR

“ Dr. Billy LaRue was a wonderful man. I so enjoyed our phone conversations when ever he would call K-State Vet Health Center for a consult or referral. He was an absolute joy!!! Always made my day when he would call. Heaven just received a wonderful veterinarian/man!!!

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**Marsha Roblyer** - March 10, 2015 at 09:57 AM

RE

“ Rhonda And John Edmondson lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue



rhonda and john edmondson - March 10, 2015 at 08:54 AM

CS

“ Cindy S lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue



Cindy S - March 10, 2015 at 08:35 AM

CS

God speed Dr. LaRue.... you will be missed

Cindy S - March 10, 2015 at 08:35 AM

GL

“ GLENDA LEROY lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue



gLENDA IEROY - March 09, 2015 at 03:10 PM

NA

“ Dr. LaRue meant a lot to me and my family, and he will be greatly missed. He took excellent care of our animals (and us too) for decades, and always had great stories to go along with his information and instructions (one of which was always "take 'em home and love 'em"). I learned a lot from him through the years, not just about animals, but about people as well. Thanks Bill--you were as caring as they come.

*Nancy Mahan*

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**Nancy** - March 09, 2015 at 01:27 PM

AT

“ Annette Thomas lit a candle in memory of Dr. Billy Joe LaRue



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**Annette Thomas** - March 09, 2015 at 01:11 PM