

*John Charles Blackburn, youngest son of Clyde O. and Clara B. (Chadd) Blackburn, was born January 15, 1929, and passed from this life Wednesday, September 11, 2019, at the age of 90 years, 7 months, 28 days.*

*John was born one mile north and one mile west of Courtland, KS. He was proud to have been named for both of his grandfathers, John Chadd and Charles Blackburn. When John was six weeks old, he moved to the Blackburn farm one mile west of Courtland, KS.*

*John attended Courtland schools and graduated from Courtland High School in 1947, where he excelled in football, basketball and track. John lettered in all sports all four years of high school. His love of sports continued as John started refereeing junior high basketball while still in high school. John was a registered official with the Kansas State High School Activities Association for 29 years, calling basketball and football games all over the region. He was selected to serve as an official for two Kansas State High School Basketball Championship tournaments, in addition to community college and small college games. For decades, people would greet John in even the most obscure of places, telling stories of the many games he called in his years as an official.*

*John bought his first cow at the age of 16, which began a remarkable stretch of more than 70 years of raising cattle. In 1962, John bought his first registered American Quarter Horse mare and later added a stallion, to provide equine breeding services. John thoroughly enjoyed riding his horses for both cattle work and for pleasure. The family rode their horses in many parades in Republic and Jewell counties.*

*John served in the U.S. Army from July 1952 to June 1954. After leaving the military, John enjoyed dinners twice each year with eleven other young men from Republic County who were drafted into the military in 1952, and eventually, with their growing families.*

*On November 20th, 1955, John married Julia "Judy" Ann Gray, who he had met in the summer of 1950 at the Jewell, KS, Old Settlers celebration. Their marriage was blessed with four daughters: Nancy, Diane, Joan and Jana. In 1967 the Blackburns moved to the farmstead one mile west of Courtland where they lived for the next 40 years. In 2007, John and Judy moved off the farm and into Courtland.*

*John joined Courtland Methodist Church in high school, and later served as a leader of Methodist Youth Fellowship and was a Courtland UMC trustee for many years. He was a community 4-H leader for the Pawnee Indians and a 65-year member of American Legion Post #193.*

*Through his involvement in the community, John was active in supporting his girls and everyone else's children in the athletic and music programs at Courtland High School and later Pike Valley High School. He was a surrogate grandfather and father figure to countless young people in the community. Everyone knew "Johnny B." could be found driving a blue pick-up truck with a border collie riding in the back. He was known for being an ornery Irishman, prolific in the gift of nicknames, many of which could be shared publicly; others were best kept in the confines of the home.*

*John will be forever remembered by his wife of nearly 64 years, Judy; daughters Nancy Blackburn and husband John Cox of Columbus, NE, Diane Boman and husband Lonnie of Belleville, KS, Joni Blackburn of Columbus, NE, and Jana Calkins and husband Troy of Olathe, KS; grandchildren Chad Hallack, Belleville, KS, Mindy Oppriecht and husband Ethan of Derby, KS, Will Boman (Alyssa Covert) of Belleville, KS, Evan and Claire Calkins of Olathe, KS; and great-grandchildren Noah and Emmalee Oppriecht, and Cailyn Hallack, and many other dear family and close friends.*

*John was preceded in death by his parents, Clyde and Clara, and brothers Warren, Fay and Bob.*

***Tibbetts-Fischer Funeral Home  
Belleville, Kansas***



*In Memory Of*



*John Charles Blackburn*

*Entered this Life*  
January 15, 1929

*Departed this Life*  
September 11, 2019

*Service of Remembrance*  
Monday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019 ~ 2:00 p.m.  
United Methodist Church ~ Courtland, Kansas

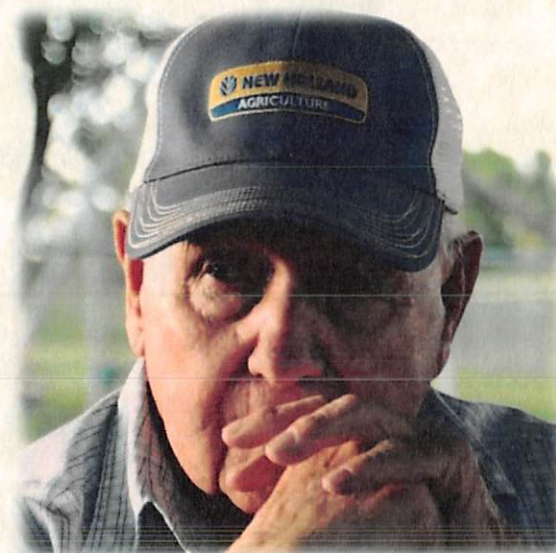
*Officiant*  
Pastor Sandra Jellison-Knock

*Eulogists*  
Pastor Kathy Aiello  
Mr. Dana Brewer

*Special Musical Selections*  
“Wedding Banquet” as recorded by The Medical Mission Sisters  
“All Things Bright and Beautiful” congregational hymn  
“How Lovely is Thy Dwelling Place” as recorded by Deep Still  
“Celebration Jig” as recorded by Deep Still

*Casket Bearers*  
Mark Russell ~ Jon Russell ~ Darin Russell  
Randy Erickson ~ Brock Hanel ~ John Garman

*Interment*  
Courtland Cemetery ~ rural Courtland



*"Sometimes when storms are brewing in children's lives that they have no control over, the steady, honest, and just plain presence of other kids' parents being normal is a refuge that leaves a lasting impact. You and John, but especially John, because my own dad was melting down into a hot mess, were those people for me. I know he has impacted many children in Courtland with all that he has volunteered for, and your own children and what they have been and are -- but for me and what I expected later in life, John left a quiet outline of what a father and husband could and should be. Tell him thank you and to enjoy the whole year...not just the birthday yesterday!"*

*--Dawn Lovewell Gabel  
January 15, 2014*