



Gerald Dean Vanhoutte

June 24, 1931 - March 22, 2026

Springfield, Missouri

Family and neighbors in Springfield mark the death of Gerald Dean Vanhoutte on March 22, 2026. He was 94. Born in Springfield on June 24, 1931, into a German-American household that treated work as a language. From the start, he treated promises like tools: keep them sharp, do not lend them lightly.

He fixed cars that kept freight from inventing delay theater. A railcar chalk mark stick meant the yard would not guess. Colleagues still mention a railcar chalk mark stick.

In 1954 he married Barbara. The marriage was not a speech; it was groceries, repairs, and two sons walked to school in weather that did not care. When Barbara died in 2019, he kept what still worked: the early walk, the small garden, the call on Sundays.

Neighbors remember a porch light left on for anyone walking home late. He preferred the hour before a town fully wakes. Springfield was home enough that he never rehearsed an introduction. The key is still under the same brick.

Services

Services in Springfield will be simple: stories, coffee, and the names of people who showed up. Flowers optional; support for a local clinic or trade scholarship preferred.

NN-OBIT-2026-C925

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