



Stephen Avants Crank

December 18, 1933 - July 5, 2025

Stephen “Steve” Avants Crank was a man whose life was defined by devotion—to his family, his faith, his work, and his community. Born on December 18, 1933, in Muskogee, Oklahoma, to Floyd and Captolia Crank, Steve was the eldest of three children and took his role as the big brother of Marilyn and Susan seriously. His childhood was rooted in Muskogee, though for a few years the family lived in Parsons, Kansas, where his father worked on the railroad during World War II.

At Muskogee Central High School, Steve played football, basketball, golf, and ran track. His determination and work ethic earned a place on the 1950 Roughers state championship football team—a memory he carried proudly for the rest of his life. After graduating in 1952, he went on to study Mechanical Engineering at Oklahoma A&M (now Oklahoma State University), where he joined Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity and earned a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Army ROTC. A loyal Cowboy for life, Steve remained a proud OSU supporter and active member of the Alumnae Association.

While in Stillwater, Steve met Charlotte Bauer, the love of his life. They married on June 3, 1956, and together they built a marriage of 68 years filled with love and shared adventures. They were blessed with two children, Kevin in 1959 and Stephanie in 1961.

Steve's career in plastics engineering took his young family across the country and even overseas. Beginning in Houston with Shell Chemical Company, the company would then send the family to New Jersey and the Netherlands, where Steve worked with a team pioneering developments in the plastics industry, including work on Styrofoam. In 1966, he moved his family to Greenville, Ohio, to open Ohio Kal Plastics. After the development and sale of that company, they relocated to Alma, Michigan, where he became vice president of manufacturing for Alma Plastics, overseeing seven factories.

In 1977, Steve and his family came home to Muskogee, where he partnered with Bill Ricketts in Ricketts Construction and 3 Rivers Steel. Returning to his roots gave Steve the chance to invest not only in business, but also in his community and church.

Beyond his professional life, Steve was devoted to his faith and community. He was a longtime member of St. Paul's Methodist Church, where he led mission trips to build schools in Central America, served in the food bank, and prepared and served meals to the hungry on holidays. Steve was also a longtime member of Sequoyah Club where he enjoyed birdwatching, fishing, Bell Parties, and relaxing on his deck with a drink in hand. After his retirement, he most enjoyed cheering on the OSU Cowboys, relaxing at his cabin, watching his four grandchildren grow up, and pampering his beloved poodle, Tigger. He made the best omelets, only listened to classical cassette tapes in the car, and always had an anecdote to back up the advice that he just had to give you. He was proud of his family history and believed in the importance of traditions, such as the Crank Family Reunion, an annual event to which he looked forward to reconnecting with relatives through song, dance, storytelling, and laughter.

Steve will be welcomed home to Heaven by his parents; his beloved wife, Charlotte; his daughter, Stephanie; and his sister, Marilyn. He leaves behind

his son, Kevin and his wife Julie; his sister, Susan; his grandchildren, John (Andrea), Morgan (Jordan), Mollie (Seth), and Stephen; and his seven great-grandchildren, Ava and Naomi Crank, Liam, Ellis, and Rory Stancil, and Sophie and Ivy Sherman.

Steve will be remembered for his steady faith, his work ethic, his adventurous spirit, and the deep love he poured into his family and community. His legacy lives on in the next generation who will carry his witty humor, his shared lessons, and his love forward.

A graveside service celebrating Steve's life will be at 11AM, Saturday, September 13, 2025 at Greenhill Cemetery.

Cemetery Details

Greenhill Cemetery

1500 N. York Street
Muskogee, OK 74403

Previous Events

Graveside Memorial Service

SEP **13**. 11:00 AM (CT)

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Muskogee, OK 74403