



## Paul Fairless

December 23, 1928 - March 2, 2025

Paul U. Fairless, age 96, a lifelong resident of rural Vienna, passed away peacefully at his home on Sunday evening, March 2, 2025, at 6:30 P.M., surrounded by his loving family and faithful canine companions.

Paul was born on December 23, 1928, in Johnson County, Illinois, to Robert Lance and Augusta (Cooper) Fairless.

He was united in marriage to Gloria Sue (Keltner) Fairless, who preceded him in death on September 27, 2018.

Paul is survived by his children, Jo Alice (Bill) Griffin of Vienna and Anita Glova of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; two grandchildren, Travis (Laura) Glova and Trevor Glova; a great-granddaughter, London Glova; and his beloved canine companions, Riley, Baby Girl, and Twinkie. Additionally, he leaves behind “half of Johnson County,” as he was blessed with more family and friends than could possibly be listed.

In addition to his wife and parents, Paul was preceded in death by his siblings, Francis and Eugene.

Paul lived a life defined by hard work, laughter, and generosity. As a lifelong farmer, he found joy in working the land and had a deep appreciation for the

outdoors. In his younger years, he enjoyed deer hunting, and his passion for wildlife preservation remained strong throughout his life. Whether behind the wheel of his beloved John Deere tractor or his signature red Ford pickup truck, Paul's love for farming and machinery was undeniable.

Beyond his work, Paul was an avid tractor puller. He also enjoyed sharing meals with friends, particularly during his mornings with the "Breakfast Club" at the Goreville Grill. As a natural prankster, he was always ready with a joke or a clever trick, ensuring laughter followed wherever he went. He enjoyed listening to western swing music and found joy in life's simple pleasures.

Paul's kindness and generosity knew no bounds—he was always willing to lend a helping hand. His faith as a Jehovah's Witness in the Marion, IL chapter helped shape his kind and giving nature. Above all, he will be remembered for his wonderful sense of humor, his ability to turn any moment into a cherished memory, and the love he shared with those fortunate enough to know him.

Per Paul's wishes, there will be no public visitation or service.

For those who wish to honor Paul's memory, charitable contributions may be made to a charity of the donor's choice.

# Tribute Wall

MS

“ My family and I met Paul and Gloria over 30 yrs ago when my girls were just little. today we are all together visiting with my youngest daughter in Michigan talking about old times, and Paul and Gloria, s name came up. one of our fondest memories was our visit with them. We thought we would check the map to see where exactly they lived and came across his passing.

Our family is truly sorry for your families loss. I knew Paul was a special man just from our one time meeting him, so hospitable and loved his sense of humor. What i remember most, is when he put us up in a small cabin the cabin was a part of the house he was born in. He called it Buzzards Roost, he had cut out the center section of his birth house and pulled it up a hill by a lake he made, it was so wonderful, he made it even more wonderful for my girls by throwing some feed on the front porch so the deer would come to the door and they sure did. The cabin was a part of who Paul was, part of his lineage it got to it's location with a combine tractor because he was a farmer. Our jeep tour showed just how proud he was of his family's land, and the buzzard, s roost card he passed out to come back gave us a sense of his humor. The last thing I remember talking to Paul about was an engine he had in the barn he asked me to keep an eye out for a nice ford car when I got back to Florida. I was so happy to see in one of the posts that he got a ford fairlane. Our hearts go out to the family. Paul loved God, he loved his family and he loved people. And our family loved him. He was a wonderful man. Truly be messed.

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**Matthew Spencer** - February 16 at 02:08 PM

JF

“ Our condolences to your family. My last memory was when my Mom (cousin Betty Cooper) and I spent the weekend at Cousin Francis' house in town. Your Mom and Dad came to dinner and all we did was tell stories and laugh for hours. Your Dad had the best jokes. Let all of your wonderful memories light up your heart as they do my sister (Donna Dykstra) and I. So sorry this is late, we just heard about the loss of your father.

*Jean Cappozzo*

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**Jean Cappozzo -Cooper Family** - August 01, 2025 at 11:26 PM

AG

“ To all our family and friends, we are deeply touched and profoundly grateful for your kind and heartfelt comments. We feel truly blessed to have countless cherished memories of our father, and we are overwhelmed with gratitude knowing that so many of you contributed to creating those precious moments.

*Dad was a character like no other, with countless remarkable qualities—but our favorite was undoubtedly his wicked sense of humor. A good sense of humor can carry you through life's most stressful moments, and Dad exemplified that every single day. For years, he carried around a folder filled with jokes and funny stories that he loved sharing with friends and family. We believe his ability to laugh and bring joy to others helped him reach the incredible age of 96.*

*As we remember him, we know he would wish for all of you to live well, keep smiling, enjoy some biscuits and gravy—or cornbread and beans—surrounded by your loved ones, and continue creating beautiful, lasting memories.*

*---Anita and Jo (daughters)*

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**Anita Glova** - March 20, 2025 at 09:17 PM

BB

“ *My father, JD Carter spent alot of time working for Paul. Dad had much respect and always admired Paul. "Fine Man" were his words. Not sure which one was more particular. Bev Bolanowski*

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**Bev Bolanowski** - March 11, 2025 at 12:44 PM

“Urban centers have somehow posited themselves as the center of the universe, creating an imbalance where rural contributions seem less valuable despite their fundamental importance to food security. There's also a psychological impediment where humans tend to value what they know and understand while dismissing what's unfamiliar. For urbanites without agricultural exposure, it's easier to underestimate the intellectual demands and complexity of farming operations. This disconnect is particularly ironic considering that farmers manage complex biological systems, navigate unpredictable environmental factors, maintain sophisticated machinery, analyze market trends, and make high-stakes decisions that balance economic, environmental, and practical concerns daily—often with their family's livelihood on the line.

*For some farmers who do not have sons, there may be grief over what feels like a broken chain. Many received the farm from their parents who received it from theirs, creating a powerful sense of stewardship rather than ownership. The inability to continue this tradition can feel like failing ancestors who entrusted them with the family legacy. The impact varies dramatically based on individual circumstances, but for many, it represents one of the most significant transitions of their life, touching on questions of legacy, identity, and meaning.*

*Anita and Jo Alice, your father's worth wasn't defined solely by his occupation, but by how he approached life and treated others—a legacy you can cherish and continue regardless of your chosen occupational paths.*

*Uncle Paul to me, embodied the essence of rural life – hardworking, generous with his time, and infinitely patient. As a child, he welcomed us into his world, letting me ride alongside him on his tractors as he tended to his fields. These experiences gave me an intimate view of farming that shaped my appreciation for the land and his work. Some of my fondest memories include the summer days spent stacking hay in his barns. Though the chiggers under my*

*belt line and ticks on my ankles were unwelcome companions, Uncle Paul's guidance and humor made even these challenges bearable. As I grew older, he entrusted me with greater responsibilities, teaching me to drive his large John Deer 4440 tractors and help haul the large ho-ho hay bales (as we Goddard kids like to call them)– lessons in trust and capability that extended far beyond farming.*

*The evenings at Uncle Paul's farm were magical – the rhythmic sounds of cicadas, watching the dogs chase frogs through the grass, watching the heat lightning on the front porch. These simple pleasures created a sanctuary during difficult times in my youth. What made Uncle Paul truly special was his warmth toward everyone he met. He always had a funny story to share and never spoke ill of anyone. His kindness and good nature were constants in a changing world.*

*To his daughters: your father's legacy lives on in the countless lives he touched. The lessons of compassion, hard work, and finding joy in simple things that he taught us will continue to guide us. Uncle Paul's legacy lives on through the wisdom he shared, not just through continued farming. The lessons of patience, integrity, hard work, and kindness that he taught you are portable values that enrich any life path.*

*Uncle Paul's absence leaves an unfillable void, but the memories of his laughter, wisdom, and caring heart will continue to comfort me. May we honor his memory by embracing the values he lived by every day.*

*His children have no doubt received many of these same gifts, and will carry forward the most important aspects of his legacy. This chain is not broken.*

*Rest in peace, Uncle Paul. You will be deeply missed but never forgotten.*

*- Paul Goddard and Family*

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**Paul Goddard** - March 09, 2025 at 10:36 PM

JG

“ *The Obituary and other tributes pretty much say it all. We would amplify that we have lost a cherished friend and relative, truly a prince of a man with twinkling blue eyes who was as fun loving as he was gracious, Our family will never forget vacations at Tall Tree on the Fairless Farm (or "funny farm" as we called it) with Paul, Gloria, and children. As with other visitors, literally from all over the world, Paul treated guests to hay rides and daredevil jeep rides through fields, forest, and treacherous creek beds, as well as horseback cattle roundups. He loved a good prank, including his souped up old tractor that won countless tractor pulls against bigger and shiny new contenders at the fair, Joe treasures the days spent working in the hayfields with Paul during visits, which like other activities transported us back to our youth in Southern Illinois, Paul had an almost encyclopedic knowledge of Johnson County geography and residents and the loss of this unforgettable man has left another great void. Joe and Shirley (Keltner) Goddard and children.*

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**Joe and Shirley Goddard** - March 07, 2025 at 11:01 AM

EB

“ *Paul was a great neighbor full of stories about the history of his community. He liked to share thoughts about his fairlane and look at mine.  
Loved to hear him chuckle and will miss him.  
Ed Billingsley*

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**Eddie Billingsley** - March 06, 2025 at 02:34 PM

AK

“ I have such fond memories of being out at Paul and Gloria’s visiting with Anita. More recently I have had opportunities to talk to him at the Goreville Grill. He was a special man, and will be missed. Anita Branscum Kerley



Anita Kerley - March 06, 2025 at 02:10 PM

SF

“ I get through home territory every couple of years and Paul was always a high point of my visits. He told a story on my last visit about getting in trouble with a friend that lived away down the road ... he began at his place and described everyone's house, the springs along the way, every bend in the road, and probably every squirrel that crossed the road ..ha .. and that was before the funny story, I was amazed at his memory. He was a big man in life. There are so many I miss sense my first memory of Grandma Lena Fairless passing (1956) when I was 6. I am thankful for our Redeemer ... we will be together again.

Steven Fairless - March 06, 2025 at 10:31 AM

KB

“ Keith Bell lit a candle in memory of Paul Fairless



Keith Bell - March 05, 2025 at 04:48 PM

LF

“ Loved the few times I got to spend with Paul. I would never tire of hearing his stories of the pranks he pulled; I remember often he would start laughing towards the end of a story even before he reached the end/punchline. He was one of those people I could have just sat and listened to for hours. Dad really respected him and I know it was a pleasure for my dad whenever they could spend time together. Anita and Jo Alice, you are in my prayers. - Lena Fairless

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**Lena Fairless** - March 05, 2025 at 11:55 AM

GR

“ Gary & Nancy Riley lit a candle in memory of Paul Fairless



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**Gary & Nancy Riley** - March 05, 2025 at 10:05 AM

JJ

“ I owned the old Gray place east of his place in Pond town from 1978 until about 2020 and would pass his house every time I went there. If I remember correctly, he and my late father-in law, Cub Boner were involved together in the splitting of their farm by the state through eminent domain.

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**Jerry Jackson** - March 05, 2025 at 07:19 AM

MC

“ Paul Fairless was my uncle but he always seemed more like a big brother. He was 10 years older than me and we lived with him, Grandmother, and Granddaddy when we were young, 80 or so years ago. We always remained close and he was always a very dear part of our family. I have many good memories of Paul and will miss him so much. My love and deepest sympathy to Anita, Jo Alice, and their families.

*Marjorie Stewart Cullen*

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**Marjorie A Cullen** - March 04, 2025 at 10:01 PM

CH

“ Cheryl Harris lit a candle in memory of Paul Fairless



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**Cheryl Harris** - March 04, 2025 at 08:59 PM

KA

“ My sincere condolences & prayers for all the family. I have fond childhood memories of his genuine kindness.

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**Kathy(Black)Holt** - March 04, 2025 at 05:10 PM

SC

“ Where do I begin.. My dad worked for Paul as a child on up till he joined the military.. Paul has known me since I was born.. We spent a lot of time visiting with Paul and Gloria.. Paul always has a story to tell. Paul use to take us up on snake hole in his ole jeep.. he Always had a couple blue heeler dogs lol.. Always up to go fishin.. My dad use to say "Paul hides all the honey holes. So sometimes you just gotta watch where he goes." I always said if he hid his honey holes like he hid his watermelon patch, we were in trouble lol... My heart breaks thinking about not being able to stop by on my deer drives and say hi.. My heart goes out to Anita and Jo Alice.. and his 2 grandkids.. Paul was an amazing person and I am honored to have had him a part of my life.. I can only imagine what Paul and Dad and Jarrod and GPA Cheek are doing right now lol.. I can hear the fish stories already.. Paul Fairless, you will be missed.. Give Gloria a hug from us down here too..

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**Shekinah Cheek** - March 04, 2025 at 05:07 PM

PS

“ Pete And Donna Stewart lit a candle in memory of Paul Fairless



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**Pete and Donna Stewart** - March 04, 2025 at 04:40 PM

DN

“ I became acquainted with both Paul and Gloria while they were pioneering for Jehova Wirness Hall. They both actually became like another set of parents to me. They would always get in touch with me when I was driving in bad weather. Paul was always laughing at life and things he had found. I will truly miss him, and I send prayers of healing for his family, for They have lost a wonderful man and father.



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**DONALD NICKENS** - March 04, 2025 at 03:41 PM

RJ

“ Thinking of Paul and his family! 🙏



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**Ron Harner, Jr.** - March 04, 2025 at 02:08 PM

LK

“ Linda Koehler lit a candle in memory of Paul Fairless



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**Linda Koehler** - March 04, 2025 at 01:05 PM



“ *Carol Bryant lit a candle in memory of Paul Fairless*



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**Carol Bryant** - March 04, 2025 at 12:32 PM

RS

“ *Rodney And Kelly Shires lit a candle in memory of Paul Fairless*



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**Rodney and Kelly Shires** - March 04, 2025 at 12:27 PM

DH

“ *Dallas And Charlene Harner sent a virtual gift in memory of Paul Fairless*



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**Dallas and Charlene Harner** - March 04, 2025 at 12:02 PM

JM

“ *It is a very sad day for all of his many friends and family that loved spending time with man. He always loved a prank. Sad day 😞*  
*Bob and Jeannie McCall*



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**Jeannie McCall** - March 04, 2025 at 11:55 AM

TR

“ *Teresa Richerson lit a candle in memory of Paul Fairless*



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**Teresa Richerson** - March 04, 2025 at 11:41 AM

SJ

“ *Steve & Darla Jones lit a candle in memory of Paul Fairless*



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**Steve & Darla Jones** - March 04, 2025 at 11:40 AM

BC

“ *Bob and Kim Collins*



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**Bob and Kim Collins** - March 04, 2025 at 11:26 AM

CV

“ *Paul was one of the sweetest men I had the privilege of knowing. I spent many days with him and his family in my childhood, and blessed to have many fond memories of him! He would call me Sandy, as he liked to joke with me! Thoughts and prayers for his precious family!*

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**Cindy VanCleve** - March 04, 2025 at 11:18 AM

HB

“ Henry And Frances Bullock lit a candle in memory of Paul Fairless



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**Henry and Frances Bullock** - March 04, 2025 at 10:23 AM

LM

“ Larry And Carolyn McGill lit a candle in memory of Paul Fairless



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**Larry and Carolyn McGill** - March 04, 2025 at 10:09 AM

KB

“ Karen Brumley lit a candle in memory of Paul Fairless



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**Karen Brumley** - March 04, 2025 at 10:08 AM