

Man, 99, Has 21st Funeral

Jim Gernhart, 99, Burlington, Colo., says he's worried he won't get a proper burial after he dies. So he recently participated in his 21st funeral for himself. The retired farmer says when he does die, he'll be buried in Goodland, Kan., because, "I wouldn't be caught dead in Burlington."

Bernhart says his concern over lack of a decent funeral for himself caused him to hold 21 funerals in the past 25 years.

Townpeople honored him with a 100th birthday funeral parade. Gernhart actually doesn't turn 100 until November 20, but, as one of the organizers said, "He's getting a little old, and we're afraid he might not even be around then."

Gernhart staged his first funeral in 1951. He bought a copper casket, rented the local armory and spent more than \$15,000 on a funeral party that attracted national attention.



NEWS PHOTOS BY DAVID L. CORNWELL