



## Local veteran named 4th of July parade Grand Marshal

**Ames, IA** – Howard Kyle joined the Air Force in 1950, just months before the start of the Korean War. Born and raised in Ames, he was just 18-years-old.

“I knew I wanted to serve and picked the Air Force because B-29’s were my favorite airplane,” Kyle said. “I knew I wanted to work on them.”

Kyle was chosen to be this year’s Ames Main Street 4th of July parade Grand Marshal because of his service to the country and to the community of Ames.

“We’ve had basketball stars, local politicians, and other well-known people in the community as Grand Marshal,” said Cindy Hicks, Executive Director of the Main Street

Cultural District. “But we have never had a military veteran.”

The parade committee decided it was time to have a Grand Marshal who had served to protect the freedom the parade, held on our nation’s Independence Day, represented. As a life-long Story County resident, who met his wife on Main Street in Ames, Kyle was a perfect fit for the job.

“I served at five bases in four years,” Kyle said. “I ended up in air training command. We were equipping and training crews to go overseas and fight a war.”

Kyle was born at Mary Greeley Medical Center, the first of four generations of his family born there.

“That old hospital that’s celebrating 100 years was only 15-years-old when I made my first visit there,” Kyle said.

He was on furlough in Ames in 1950, driving a 1947 Ford Super Deluxe convertible, when he met the woman he would make his wife.

“My buddy and I were ‘scooping the loop’ on Main,” Kyle said. “I saw Delores and her friend going the other direction.”

The two parked next to each other at Tom’s Grill, where Great Plains Sauce and Dough is currently located, and were married the same year. Where-ever the Air Force sent Kyle, his beloved Delores went too.

“We traveled 48 states together,” Kyle said. “She was just a beautiful woman.”

During his four years in the military he was never sent overseas, but saw a lot of men who were.

“I had three friends who went over and never came back,” Kyle said. “I knew I could be sent at any minute. It is always a concern when you are wearing a uniform.”

In 1953 Kyle received orders of an extension on his service time, but the war ended and it was rescinded. He left the Air Force in 1954.

Howard and Delores came back to the Ames area where they raised two sons and a daughter. Kyle now shows everyone he can his wallet full of photos, which include pictures of four grandchildren and three great grandchildren. After his military service he worked as a local farmer, then as a truck driver, before spending 35 years working for the city of Ames in the electric department. Still, it was his marriage to Delores that gave him the most happiness.

“Everything she did was so special,” Kyle said. “We were married for 65 years.”

According to Kyle, the key to wedded bliss is to never go to bed mad at each other. Delores died on May 29 of this year after battling diabetes and cancer. For five years Howard took care of her at home.

“It hit her awful hard when our oldest son died in December of 2012,” Kyle said. “She never really got over that.”

Many afternoons you will find Howard Kyle at the Ames American Legion Post 37 on Main Street. He’s been going there for over 30 years. He sips a beverage and talks to friends who served their country just like he did. There’s no bragging there, just a great amount of pride.

“It was an honor and privilege to be able to serve my country,” Kyle said.

In his role as Grand Marshal, Kyle will be riding in at 1932 Roadster near the beginning of the parade. The parade starts at 11 a.m. at Clark and Main Street. More information on the Ames Main Street 4th of July Parade, including the route, can be found at [www.amesdowntown.org](http://www.amesdowntown.org).

#### **Other 4th of July events in downtown Ames:**

Mayor’s Pancake Breakfast, City Hall, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Bill Riley Talent Competition, Main and Burnett, 9 – 11 a.m.