



Ralph L. Alexander Watts, Jr. (Alec)

September 10, 1939 - January 16, 2021

Ralph L. Alexander Watts, Jr. (Alec) was born September 10, 1939 in Memphis, Tennessee and passed away peacefully on January 16, 2021, at home with his loving wife, Renee, by his side.

Alec lived in Memphis until his father, who worked for Ford Motor Company, was offered a dealership opportunity in Clarksdale, MS. He graduated from Clarksdale High School in 1957 and then went on to the University of Mississippi where he was a Member of Kappa Sigma fraternity and played French horn, travelling with the band to perform at the 1958 World's Fair in Brussels, Belgium. He received his BBA in Accounting in 1961. After college, he served in the U.S. Army as a Lieutenant. The majority of his service was spent as Tank Platoon Leader with the 3rd Armored Division in Friedberg, Germany. After returning to the U.S., he moved back to Memphis and began a career in public accounting. In 1966 he joined Winston J. Cannon, CPA and soon became a partner with Cannon, Watts and Company. In 1987, he earned the CFP designation. A member of the AICPA and a life member of the Tennessee Society of CPAs, his career in public accounting and financial planning lasted over 55 years with his commitment to his clients' wellbeing never waning.

Alec was active in United States Junior Chamber and was fortunate to meet Elvis Presley when he was recognized as one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men of America by the Jaycees in 1970. It was in the Jaycees where Alec developed a passion for softball, which he played well into his sixties. He also enjoyed racquetball, tennis, and despite the frustration inherent to the sport, he was an avid golfer. He was also a sports fan, rarely missing an Ole Miss football or Memphis Tigers basketball game.

A devout Christian saved at the age of eight years, Alec was a member of Crossroads Baptist Church in Eads, TN where he helped found the Crossroads Runners, a men's group dedicated to maintaining focus on Christ. His faith led him to service in prison ministry at the East Arkansas Regional Unit, also known as Brickeys, where he counselled inmates until health issues prevented him from continuing his work there. Although he was

unable to travel to Brickeys, he continued to correspond with inmates who stated how much they missed his presence.

While he had many interests, his greatest joys came from the time he was able to share with his family. He was married to the love of his life and was a faithful husband and nurturing father. A dedicated "Granddaddy," he took great pride in his five grandchildren and was tirelessly committed to spoiling the lot. Alec's persistent love will be missed by all.

Alec was preceded in death by his father, Ralph Watts, Sr.; mother, Eva Ruth Watts; sister, Judy Roberts and daughter, Elizabeth Wells. He is survived by his wife of 37 years, Renee Wimberly Watts; son, William Watts (Anneliese); daughter, Alecia Watts Clark (Shane); five grandchildren, Trey, Brandon, Alexandra, twins Annabelle and Liza; two great-granddaughters, Joanna and Elizabeth; sister-in-law, Donna Bumgardner, brothers-in-law, Dennis Bumgardner and Wallace Ritter, Jr.; and many nieces and nephews.

Due to COVID, there will be a private family service at Memorial Park Funeral Home. Honorary pallbearers are Michael Allen Sr., Dr. John S. Buchignani, Jr., Dennis Bumgardner, Van Gray, Graden Kirksey, Stephen McDaniel, Larry Peebles, Wallace Ritter, Jr., William Walker, Joseph Weller, and Kevin Wright.

To view the webcasted service click the following link:
<http://webcast.funeralvue.com/events/viewer/46277>

In lieu of flowers the family requests memorials be made to the American Cancer Society, Susan G. Komen Foundation or the Memphis Humane Society.

Comments



“ A webcast video has been added.



Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery - January 23 at 07:51 PM



“ Such a beautiful and touching service, thank you for sharing.

Mike Allen - January 26 at 03:39 PM



“ I remember so many memories!!!! You will be dearly missed by so many. I will Cherish those memories. I will never forget the first time you laid eyes on my son you said Annie he looks just like you and he is very handsome young man!!!! I cherish every memory I have with you uncle Alec I miss you so much and I love you dearly.



Annie brice - January 26 at 07:36 AM



“ There are just too many good memories to share, but suffice to say Alec and Renee certainly left an indelible mark on the Allen family. I will never forget when (as an accounting major in my last year at Memphis State University) I was summoned into the office of “Mr. Watts” (my first employer in my profession of choice). It was a nerve-wracking experience walking down the hall searching my brain to think of what I had done wrong. Imagine my relief when the message he had for me was a positive review of my work thus far that ended with “Call me Alec, from now on”. Little did I know at the time this was the pivotal moment when Alec’s role in my life began the transition from employer, to mentor, to rival (only when Ole Miss and Memphis played each other in football), to friend, to my CPA and ultimately to “family”. Alec has always been a part of my adult life; he mentored me in my career, we played golf, we went to the lake, we watched Tiger basketball and ate Formosa together. I am not sure when it started, but Renee, Alec, Pam, and I would have our annual Christmas light viewings (complete with Krispy Kreme donuts). Pam and I got married about two weeks after Renee and Alec, he was in our wedding, we watched Tiger basketball and ate Formosa together, he was there when my children were born, we continued our Christmas lights outing and my boys still reminisce about looking at Christmas lights with Uncle Alec and Aunt Renee (and the Krispy Kreme donuts). They actually asked at one point, is Uncle Alec really our Uncle? Again...too many good memories to share and the Good Lord willing, they will not be forgotten. However, I do regret that COVID prevented us from sharing that last round of golf and that last Tiger basketball game with Formosa together and that last Christmas lights viewing (and the Krispy Kreme donuts); THAT was one of our last conversations. Alec had a powerful positive influence on so many lives and he certainly will not be forgotten. Our thoughts and prayers will continue to be with the Watts family as we carry on without a great man and our great friend Alec. Rest In Peace “Mr. Watts”, Rest In Peace.

With Love and Respect,
Mike, Pam, Michael, and Robert

Mike Allen - January 25 at 07:07 PM



“ For Judy, Alec's sister: This is Sarah Maddox. My husband Roland grew up with Alec Watts in Clarksdale, MS. His parents were good friends of Roland's parents. Alec and Roland were contemporaries both in high school and at Ole Miss. We both know his sister Judy very well, too. Please know that we were saddened to hear of Alec's passing. Roland said that Alec was always a good guy. We renewed our contact with him when we joined the same church to which he now belonged. We wish we could be with all of you tomorrow. We pray that your family may experience God's comfort and love during this difficult time. Sarah O. Maddox

Sarah O. Maddox - January 25 at 03:09 PM



“ I am honored to know and love Uncle Alec. I remember so many wonderful memories of the times I got to spend with him and my Aunt. Like the times they took us to Maywood. How we would go to Lepanto ark for my grandmother's school festival. How Uncle Alec and aunt Renee took us to Bellevue church. How we would go swimming at their house with my children. How Uncle Alec and Aunt Renee took my daughter skating for the first time in her life. To see him smile at my daughter while holding her hand. These are just a few to name that really stick out to me. You will certainly be missed by so many but your memories and your legacy will never be forgotten. Thank you for your service and thank you for the love you shared with me and my children.



Stacy Brice - January 23 at 11:15 PM



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Annie brice - January 26 at 07:33 AM