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estate needs, Freddie recognized the need for construction work and added General Building and Highway Contracting to the list of services he wanted to provide. Over the course of 40 years, Freddie worked with families and business owners to meet their construction needs. It is difficult to travel on any Anson County Road without passing a property he assisted with selling, building or renovating. Freddie took great pride in knowing the real estate and construction businesses he started many years ago would continue to grow.

Perhaps it started with his work serving the public through his business, but Freddie soon felt a calling to serve as an elected public official. He decided to “throw his hat in the ring” and run to serve as one of Anson County’s commissioners. He was successful, this started a period serving as Anson County Commissioner that lasted for over 15 years, much of it as Chairman of the Board. He remained very proud of the accomplishments that Board achieved during his tenure. These included School Bonds that provided funding for numerous elementary schools in the county, as well as contracts to supply adjacent Union County with water. These contracts provided steady revenue that is still enjoyed decades later.

Freddie’s belief in serving the public extended far beyond his time in politics. For many years he was active in the local Civitan club, Jaycees, the United Way, and the Masons. He was a faithful member of Mt. Beulah Baptist Church where he served on the Building Committee and Deacon Board. Growing up, Freddie loved playing baseball, well known as one of the best pitchers in the county! He continued that involvement in baseball by sponsoring a local little league team for over 10 years.

Freddie’s greatest joy was his family, most of his free time was spent with them. Rarely did a weekend go by that he could not be found attending a grandchild’s dance recital, ballgame, or taking the family on short getaways to the beach or mountains. He set a Godly example on how to support and love your family that will last for generations to come.

Those who are left to cherish his memory are his wife of 56 years, Lois Watts Black; his children, Ray Black (Karey) of Wesley Chapel and Miriam Huntley (Dean) of Wadesboro; his grandchildren, Caroline Rose Black and Grayce Rae Black, both of Wesley Chapel, Kristen Jeri Diggs and Jordyn Claire Diggs, both of Gastonia and Dalton Allen Huntley of Wadesboro; his bonus grandchildren, Miller Deas of Wesley Chapel, Kaleigh Huntley of Monroe and Taylor Huntley of Wadesboro; his brothers and sister, Don Black of Chapel Hill, Carolyn Taylor of Mooresville and David “Big” Black (Robin) of Wadesboro; and his nieces and nephews and their families.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his daughter Joy Black Diggs.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Mt. Beulah Baptist Church, 3373 Country Club Rd., Wadesboro, NC 28170.

The arrangements are in care of Leavitt Funeral Home and online condolences may be made at www.leavittfh.com.

Mr. Michael Henry Horne

On Thursday, October 2, 2025, Mr. Michael Henry Horne, 61, passed away peacefully in his sleep at his home.

A memorial service was held on Thursday, October 16, 2025, at First United Methodist Church with Rev. Amy Lambert and Rev. Heather McIntyre officiating.

The family greeted friends on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at Leavitt Funeral Home and other times at Michael Horne Florist.

Michael was born May 5, 1964, in Anson County, and was the youngest son born to Claude William Horne and Mabel Ruth Harrington Horne.

He was a 1982 graduate of Southview Academy in Wadesboro and attended Wingate University and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

As a child, it was evident that Michael had a love for plants and flowers. This love was passed to him by his grandmother Harrington and his mother. He enjoyed growing plants and beautiful flowers. When he was a teenager, he first went to work with Allen Floral Gardens in Wadesboro and later he worked at Anson Flower Shop. Both Billy Warner and Doris McLendon gave him the opportunity to explore his gift of floral arranging.

After moving to Greensboro he became employed with Bob Clemmons Florist and later with Jim North at Designs North. He worked for several years in Greensboro, creating a name for himself in the florist industry and working hard to maintain a good, professional relationship with his colleagues and customers.

In 2001, following the death of his father, Michael was encouraged to consider returning home to Wadesboro to open a florist. On April 15, 2002, Michael and his brother Alan created a partnership and opened Michael Horne Florist. For 23 years, Michael offered flowers and gifts for all occasions, weddings, funerals, and day-to-day celebrations. He introduced to the community different ways to express feelings, share love and concern with beautiful flowers and gifts alike. Michael often said, “We do not just sell flowers, we sell emotions that go with flowers.”

Michael often participated in floral competitions in North Carolina and attended conferences and training, as well. He was recognized as Designer of the Year in 2000 with Greensboro Triad Professional Florist Association, and he won First Place in the Teleflora Wedding Bouquet Competition. He was a North Carolina Certified Professional Florist and participated in North Carolina State Florists Association Wonderful Wedding Workshops, Southern Retail Florists Association Flower Forums and Teleflora Creative Edge Design Influences events.

Michael was a member of First United Methodist Church; Wadesboro and he often shared his gifts and talent with the church.

Those who are left to cherish his memory are his brother, Alan Horne; his cousins, Bill Smethie (Mary Katherine), Becky Smethie Darling (Pete), Barbara Smethie Griffin, Lisa Davis Snow, Lourdes Davis Yarborough, and Emeline Horne Northcutt; a sister of the heart, Maria Flesher; his beloved cats at both the florist and home; and his extended family of customers and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents, Jonah Dock Harrington and Annie Ruth Hill Harrington and by his paternal grandparents, Rufus Henry Honre and Leola Caudle Horne.

Alan would like to express his heartfelt thanks to their friends, who he has named Michael’s Angels, for all they have done for him since Michael’s passing. The outpouring of love and concern has been a gift and testament to the lives Michael touched.

Although flowers are welcome, memorials may be made to First United Methodist Church, 118 E. Morgan St., Wadesboro, NC 28170 or to Friends of the Anson County Animal Shelter, c/o EWR CPA, P.O. Box 828, Wadesboro NC 28170 or to the

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Mr Toby Matthew McLaurin

On Sunday, October 5, 2025, Mr. Toby Matthew McLaurin 47, cherished father, son, brother, uncle and friend, passed away at the home of his parents.

Funeral services were held on Saturday, October 11, 2025, at First Baptist Church, Lee Avenue in Wadesboro. Interment followed in Anson Memorial Park.

The family greeted friends on Friday, October 10, 2025, at Leavitt Funeral Home and other times at the home of Toby’s parents.

Because Toby had an affinity for cool shoes and knew they had to be just right for his clothes, the family had asked those who attended the service wear their coolest shoes.

Toby was born February 3, 1978, in Anson County, and was a son of Donald Joe McLaurin and Frankie Lineberry McLaurin. He was 1996 graduate of Anson High School.

While in high school Toby excelled in athletics. He played both football and baseball, and held the record for weightlifting squats 645 pounds in 1995. He was proud to say he still held that record 30 years later.

Coaching little league baseball in Morven helped to spark his love for children. He was not only their coach, but he was also their friend and often served as their transportation to and from practice and games.

Following graduation from high school, Toby attended University of North Carolina at Pembroke, where he earned a bachelor's degree in health and physical education K-12. He later earned a Master of Arts in Education Administration and Supervision from the University of Phoenix.

Toby’s career in education is extensive and one of which he was proud. He was first employed with Anson County Schools as the Health and PE teacher and Assistant Principal at Wadesboro Elementary School, he was later the Health and PE teacher and Assistant Principal Peachland-Polkton Elementary School. He served as Assistant Principal at Anson Middle School. He served as Principal at Ansonville Elementary School, where under his leadership the overall testing scores for the school were raised, an accomplishment for which he was most proud. Following his time at Ansonville he served as Principal at Wadesboro Primary School.

After working with the Anson County Schools, he worked with Stanly County Schools, serving as Assistant Principal at South Stanly Middle School and later as Principal of Albemarle High School.

Toby chose to take a break from school administration and was employed with Union County Schools, as football coach at Piedmont High School in Monroe, strength training, and football coach at Forest Hills High School in Marshville, and later teaching at Walter Bickett Elementary School in Monroe.

He was currently employed with Montgomery County Schools as Assistant Principal at Montgomery Central High in Troy. He also worked part-time as a group home supervisor with Monarch Services in Union County.

Toby loved coaching football. The involvement and investment in the lives of the school kids was what meant the most to him. He would often hear from his students and players even after they finished high school and were into their adult lives. This has always brought extraordinary joy to his life.

He loved children and would do anything for them. He had a gift for working with children with special needs. He did all he could to promote the children in their activities and looked for the good in all individuals.

He was an avid Chicago Bears fan and always insisted on rooting for the underdog.

He was an animal lover. He always had a dog and his labs, Deuce and Champ, both crossed the rainbow bridge and were perhaps among those who greeted him in heaven. He dearly loved his cats, Best Friend and Cheetoh.

For Toby, of all his life accomplishments, being Leah’s dad was his greatest. To say he loved his little girl was an understatement. If you asked him about her, his eyes would light up, and his grin would be huge. He taught her everything, especially playing volleyball and softball. She is indeed her daddy’s princess, and he was her knight in shining armor.

Those who are left to cherish his memory are his daughter Leah McLaurin; his parents, Don and Frankie McLaurin; his brother Dr. Josh McLaurin (Crystal); his sister Dr. Mindi Illig (Mike); his nieces and nephew, Sophie Illig, Cheyenne Morton (Ethan) and Hunter Douglas; and his Aunt Mary Lynn Ross. He also leaves his extended family of cousins, friends, students, and colleagues

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorials be made to, The Toby McLaurin Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 423, Wadesboro, NC 28170 or by giving online: tithely.give_new/www/#/tithely/give-one-time/1302631.

To honor Toby’s memory, take time to make a difference in the life of a child.

The arrangements were in care of Leavitt Funeral Home and online condolences may be made at www.leavittfh.com.

Mr. James Fredrick Usrey

On Friday, October 10, 2025, Mr. James Fredrick Usrey, 88, passed away peacefully with his daughters at his side at McLeod Health Seacoast Hospital in Little River, SC.

There will be a memorial service at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 16, 2025, in the Chapel of Leavitt Funeral Home with Mr. Ken Caulder officiating.

The family will greet friends one hour prior to the service Thursday at the funeral home.

Fredrick was born in Anson County on June 30, 1937, and was a son of the late James Earl Usrey and the late Lucille Hedrick Usrey. He was a graduate of Lilesville High School.

Following high school graduation, Fredrick enlisted in the United States Air Force, serving 20 years prior to his retirement. While in the military he and his family were stationed at Ft. Fisher, Philippines, Hawaii, Mt. Umunhum, Ca, and Alaska. He also served during the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

Fredrick and his family moved back to Lilesville after his military career, and he was employed with Anson County at the Water Filtration Plant. He also worked with Clark Equipment, which later became Fruit of the Loom, and he retired there after 20 years of service. Following the second retirement he worked part-time at CMH Flooring in Wadesboro.

He was a longtime member of Gum Springs Baptist Church and Lilesville Civic Builders before he and his wife moved to Little River, SC.

After moving to the beach, he became a devoted member of Ocean Drive Presbyterian Church and the Freedom Boat Club. He loved being on the water and traveling but his greatest joy came from spending time with his three granddaughters, who lovingly called him “Bop.” Together with Harriet (Gigi) they were the heart of his world and a constant source of love and happiness for family and friends alike.

Above all, he cherished his role as Bop. Spending countless hours patiently fixing four-wheelers, attending imaginary tea parties, or swimming in the condo pool well past dark. He never tired of being present, and his gentle spirit, patience and devotion made every moment with family feel special.

Those who are left to cherish his memory are his daughters, Allison Usrey (C.L. Lathan) of Rockingham and Ashley Speckman (Chris) of North Myrtle Beach; his grandchildren, Sydney Bellamy (Chase Hughes) of Clemson, SC, Ellory Speckman and Avery Speckman, both of North Myrtle Beach; his twin brother Hedrick Usrey of Asheville; sister Barbara Reed of Baltimore; and dear friends and neighbors, Tim and Diana Stout of Little River.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife of 57 years, Harriet Seawell Usrey.

The family suggests that in lieu of flowers, memorials be made to McLeod Hospice Care, c/o, McLeod Health Foundation, 300 S. Dargan St., Florence, SC 29502 or to a Veterans organization of your choice.

The arrangements are in care of Leavitt Funeral Home and online condolences may be made at www.leavittfh.com.

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