

Obituaries

Mr. Winfred "Wink" Sikes

On Friday, December 10, 2021, Mr. Winfred "Wink" Sikes passed away peacefully at Hospice of Union County with Sheila, his wife of 61 years, by his side.

A Celebration of Life Service was held at First Baptist Church at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 18, with Dr. Harry Workman officiating. The family greeted friends in the church's Fellowship Hall immediately following the service.

Wink was born October 4, 1934, in the Hopewell community of the Burnsville Township. He was the son of Thomas Clyde and Effie Rushing Sikes. He was a member of Hopewell Methodist Church until joining First Baptist Church of Wadesboro in 1975.

After graduating from Burnsville High School he became employed by Seaboard Coastline Railroad (CSX) and retired as a master welder after 38 years of service.

Wink will be remembered for his many interests and hobbies. He was an avid gardener who enjoyed sharing flowers and vegetables from his garden. His mechanical mind enabled him to build and repair miniature cars and create playhouses for his children and grandchildren.

He especially loved Farmall tractors and constructed, without blueprints, five ¼ of the original sized tractors which he proudly displayed in the Wadesboro Christmas parades.

Wink was also known for his signature barbeque, cooked on the pit he built at the back of his shop, affectionately known as "Heaven." Many meals and stories were shared here throughout the year. His expertise in cooking barbeque helped raise funds for Southview Academy where he served on the board of directors. He was also called upon to help the Rotary Club with their annual barbeque, and in appreciation for his efforts was named a Paul Harris Fellow. Wink was also recognized for his service toward others by being selected to receive the Woodmen of the World Community Service Award.

Another of Wink's special interests was traveling. He and Sheila shared many Christian tours adventures throughout the United States with friends.

Wink was an active and dedicated member of First Baptist Church where he participated as a member of the Special Interest Sunday School Class. He enjoyed cooking for various church events and working with the Baptist Men Fellowship to construct handicap ramps for those in need within the community at large.

Wink was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle and friend. He is survived by his wife Sheila Kelly Sikes; daughters, Kelly Baker (Alvin) and Suzanne Gregory (David); two grandchildren, Meredith G. Thomas (Mark) and Ross Gregory; two great-grandchildren, Madison and Dahlia Gregory; a sister, Margaret Bowers; and many nieces, and nephews. Also surviving are his in-laws, Preston Kelly, Joy Kelly Butterworth, Linda Sikes Lewis, and Joyce Treadaway Sikes.

In addition to his parents, Wink was preceded in death by brothers, Ross, Lee, Tommy and Paul Sikes.

The family wishes to thank the staff of Anson Health and Rehab along with the staff at Hospice of Union County for their devotion and care during Wink's illness.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to First Baptist Church Sound System, PO Box 423, Wadesboro, NC 28170 or to Hospice of Union County, 700 W. Roosevelt Blvd., Monroe, NC 28110.

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

Mr. Alan Chester Starling

On Tuesday, December 14, 2021, Mr. Alan Chester Starling, 59, passed away at CaroMont Regional Hospital in Gastonia due to complications from COVID 19.

The family greeted friends from 1:00 until 2:30 p.m. on Monday, December 20, 2021, at Leavitt Funeral Home. A graveside service followed at 3:00 p.m. at

Anson Memorial Park.

Alan was born March 8, 1962, in Anson County, and was a son of Frances Tucker Starling and the late Larry Chester Starling. He was a graduate of Harding High School Class of 1980. He was a self-employed auto body repairman, specializing in painting.

Those left to cherish his memory are his mother Fran Starling of Wadesboro; his sister Jan Starling of W. Palm Beach, FL; his niece Brandi Winfield (Gary) of Polkton; and his great-nieces and nephew, Lexi Winfield, Kamryn Winfield and Brantley Winfield.

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

Mr. Donald "Donnie" Keith Hildreth

Mr. Donald "Donnie" Keith Hildreth, 80, passed away Sunday, December 19, 2021, at his home.

A graveside service to celebrate the life of Donnie will be held at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 22, 2021 at Hopewell Methodist Church officiated by the Reverend John Greene. The family will receive friends from 1 to 3 p.m. at Morgan and Son Funeral Home.

He was born in Polkton, NC on July 14, 1941, and was the son of the late Truston Hildreth and Bessie Lee High Hildreth. He was also preceded in death by a brother Curtis Hildreth, and a sister Evelyn Hall Huneycutt.

Mr. Hildreth is survived by his loving wife Peggy Dunn Hildreth; his sons, Mark Hildreth (Ken Earwood), Kevin Hildreth and Joel Hildreth; daughter Laurie Hildreth Anastas; three grandchildren, Adrianna Anastas, Anniston Anastas and Kevin Hildreth, Jr.; brother Richard Hildreth (Mary Lois).

Donnie and Peggy were married for 57 years. He had several areas of interest including his love of Ford vehicles, logging, and pitching horseshoes. Donnie was a devoted family man and loved each member dearly. Mr. Hildreth worked until the day of his death.

Morgan & Son Funeral Home is serving the family of Mr. Hildreth. Please keep Peggy and the family in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

Mrs. Easter Mildreth Gatewood Rhue



It's not often that someone can name herself at birth, but such was the case for Mrs. Easter Mildreth Gatewood Rhue, one of eleven children born to the late Hugh and Hallie Gatewood. Born on Easter Sunday, April 8, 1928, the doctor who delivered her, the elder "Dr. Jim" Covington, said to her mother Hallie, "Well it seems she's named herself...thus the name "Easter." Most people affectionately call her "Miss Easter." She was a strong woman with a good heart and a great sense of humor, who loved people and enjoyed helping her family and others.

"Miss Easter" graduated Valedictorian in 1947 from Henry Grove High School and enrolled in cosmetology school at Morgan & Bands Beauty College in Charlotte, NC. She graduated from there in 1949 and opened her first shop in her mother's house in Lilesville, NC. She was one of the first Small Business owners in Anson County. She later built her first shop on a "piece of land" beside her brother's home. She chose that location because it was "handy in the neighborhood" and customers would not have to walk too far to get their hair "fixed."

Mrs. Rhue's shop was a gathering place for women to come to laugh, to talk, and to be pampered. As a young widow, she created a livelihood that would provide a service to ladies in the community, a place to strategize civil rights activities, and an independent livelihood for her family that would span decades. Mrs. Rhue was committed to excellence in her chosen field and worked as a beautician for over 64 years and was the resident beautician for Smith's Funeral Home for 55 years. She was a Life Member of the NAACP, promoting voter registration and carrying people to the polls well into her 80's. Her legacy of service included being a lifelong member of Parsons Grove Missionary Baptist Church, working with the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Association to ensure fair treatment of laborers, being a member of the Beauticians and Barbers Association, and opening her home to young professionals in need of housing. (One of her dear guests is now president of a major university.) She was a fighter who battled multiple health issues including diabetes, cancer (breast and lung), Alzheimer's, Dementia; yet, she never lost her joy, her laughter, or her creative spirit. She enjoyed writing, reciting poetry for the church, and singing hymns and songs of faith.

Mrs. Rhue passed away early Tuesday morning, November 23, 2021. Services were held at Parsons Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Lilesville on Sunday, November 28, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. Pastor J.F. Quick, was the Officiant. Rev. Dr. J. Warren Parsons was the Eulogist. The family greeted guests one half hour prior to the service.

Burial concluded at Parsons Grove Missionary Baptist Church Cemetery.

Mrs. Rhue was preceded in death by her parents, Hugh and Hallie Gatewood, and her ten siblings: Danny, Beecher, Vance, Chris, James, Haywood, Reatha, Hallie Bell, Naomi and Theodia (Otis).

She is survived by her devoted daughters, Phanalphie Rhue Still (Kenneth) and Charlette Rhue Bennett (Vernon) and Carmen Gatewood; her very special niece who was her caregiver for many months, providing loving comfort and care as her health declined; grandchildren Kimberly Bennett (Cedrick) and Ray Bennett (Brittanie); five grandchildren; a host of amazing nieces, nephews, cousins, friends; and a special family friend, Magnolia Ingram.

The family wishes to thank Kimberly and Michelle, Certified Nursing Assistants, and Jodi and Megan, RNs with Hospice, for their professionalism and expert care; Anson County EMS for never failing to answer the call; and her nephew Danny McKellar for his constant acts of kindness.

Services were entrusted to Smith's Funeral Services.



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