



John Leftridge Toney

June 30, 1930 - May 14, 2023

John L. Toney, 92, passed away on May 14, 2023, in Smyrna, TN. He was born on June 30, 1930, to John H. and Frances (Fillinger) Toney in Bloomingrose, WV. After losing his mother at 18 months, he and his younger sister were raised by his father, “Mom” (Clara Stewart), and other family and friends. He was industrious and hard-working from a young age and graduated from Sherman High School in 1949. He was recruited and offered a field position with the FBI in Washington, DC, but he declined the opportunity because he did not want to leave his father and his West Virginia roots. Then, the Korean War started, and he joined the United States Air Force.

He served in the 84th Bombardment Squadron, stationed abroad at Sculthorpe RAF Station in England. As a Staff Sergeant and crew chief, “his plane” was the North American Aviation B45 Tornado, #087. While stationed in Europe, he enjoyed visiting England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Norway, France, Portugal, and Italy. In addition, he was present at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.

After returning from military service, he ventured to Ohio to work for North American Aviation in Columbus but stopped in Portsmouth, OH, where he “spotted” his future wife and soul mate, Wilma J. Hayden. They were married on June 29, 1956, in Sciotoville. John and Wilma had a son in Ohio who passed after only a few days. After that loss, he and his bride moved back to his home state of West Virginia. They had three more children, raised their family, and lived in their home in Tornado, WV, for 59 years. He and Wilma moved to Smyrna, TN, in 2016 to be closer to their daughter, Diane, and her family. John worked as a chemical operator for Union Carbide (and its successor, Rhone Poulenc) for 35 years before retiring in 1992. He made many life-long friends and later even worked with his son, J.L. As one of the original union organizers, John helped lead the successful unionization of the Union Carbide Insitute Plant by the AFL-CIO and IAM. John primarily viewed his work as a means to provide for his family. Despite his vocal views for protecting workers and the environment, he was often offered management positions. However, he never accepted the jobs because he viewed his faith and family as his true vocation and believed he needed to be true to himself and his beliefs.

He was a Christian man and a member of the church of Christ. He attended Marlaing Church of Christ in St. Albans, WV, where the members were his and Wilma’s extended

family. After moving to Tennessee, he was a member at Stewart's Creek Church of Christ, where he and Wilma made new friends and enjoyed the warm fellowship, including the young people coming to their home to sing hymns and songs.

In addition to his family, his important work was teaching and preaching at various congregations and helping others in his church family. In addition, he and Wilma enjoyed attending and participating in the area's gospel meetings and lectureships. His children remember his clear lessons and sermons and his beautiful prayers. His voice was deep, strong, and bold.

John's free time included being at home with his family and growing gardens and crops to help feed them; going camping, boating, and fishing with his family; hunting and fishing with friends and family, especially coon hunting with his son, J.L. He was the family repairman; he was not one to pay others for what he could fix – whether it was the car, washing machine, or a toaster.

John was an avid reader. It did not matter what the topic – religious books, Popular Mechanics, or “ladies’ magazines” in a doctor's office, he would pick it up and read it. In later years, his kids learned that he was also a reader of poetry and used to quote poems to his wife. In addition, John loved history, including Bible history, the American and Civil War history, and his family genealogy. His children grew to appreciate their father's wisdom and eventually realized his true brilliance. Even during his recent declining years, he frequently brightened a day with his ability to synthesize situations, whether it was world affairs or family topics.

John is survived by his daughter, Diane (Chris) Paul of Smyrna, TN, son, Mark Toney of York, ME, and partner, Danny Hartigan, and daughter-in-law, LuAnn (Toney) Wiseman. He also has three grandchildren, Lesley (Thomas) Hutchison of Buffalo, WV, Caleb (Caitlin) Paul of Murfreesboro, TN, and Hannah (Justin) Booth of Morgantown, WV, and seven great-grandchildren. In addition, he has nieces, a nephew, cousins, neighbors, friends, and beloved brothers and sisters in Christ.

Wilma, his “sweet darling” of 67 years, preceded him in death by eight days. The family celebrates their reunification, but both are dearly missed. He is also preceded in death by his sons, John Montgomery (Monty) Toney and John L. “J.L.” Toney III, and his beloved father, sister (Ellen Toney-Hey), “Mom” Stewart and family, loved father and mother-in-law, brothers and sisters-in-law, cousins, and many cherished friends.

He Loved God, His Family, and His Country.

A joint memorial service for John L. Toney and Wilma J. Toney will be held on June 9, 2023, at the Marlaing Church of Christ, 301 Ohio Avenue N, St. Albans, WV 25177.

Visitation will be from 9:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m., and the service will follow at 10:15 a.m. The inurnment will be at Donel C. Kinnard Memorial Veterans Cemetery, Dunbar, WV. A fellowship dinner will be announced at the service.

Donations may be made in his memory to Potter Children's Home and Family Ministries,

Inc. (2350 Nashville Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101) or Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort Inc. (Po Box 111180, Nashville, TN 37222). John and Wilma supported these two organizations because of the work the organizations provide to those in need. Arrangements are being coordinated by Bartlett-Nichols Funeral Home, 409 6th Ave, St Albans, WV 25177, <https://www.bartlettnicholsfuneralhome.com/obituaries/>, and Woodbine Hickory Chapel, 5852 Nolensville Rd., Nashville, TN 37211 <https://www.woodbinefuneralhome.com/obit>

Cemetery Details

Donel C. Kinnard Memorial State Veterans Cemetery

130 Academy Drive
Dunbar, WV 25064

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 9. 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM (ET)

Marlaing Church of Christ
301 Ohio Avenue N.
St. Albans, WV 25177

Memorial Service

JUN 9. 10:15 AM (ET)

Marlaing Church of Christ
301 Ohio Avenue N.
St. Albans, WV 25177

Tribute Wall

DF

“ *Delbert, Donna, and Family purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of John Leftridge Toney.*



Delbert, Donna, and Family - June 08, 2023 at 11:26 AM

JC

“ *Josh Hall and the John Chambers College purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of John Leftridge Toney.*



Josh Hall and the John Chambers College - June 05, 2023 at 09:02 AM



“ *Lily and Rose Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of John Leftridge Toney.*



May 24, 2023 at 03:59 PM



“ *Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of John Leftridge Toney.*



May 21, 2023 at 10:16 AM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of John Leftridge Toney.*

May 21, 2023 at 10:16 AM