



Mr. Johnnie Lee Gunnell

July 4, 1932 - July 19, 2016

Johnnie Lee Gunnell passed away peacefully Tuesday morning July 19, 2016 in his lifelong hometown of DeWitt, Arkansas. He was 84 years old.

He was born in DeWitt on July 4, 1932, the first child of Johnnie Clarence and Louise Wright Gunnell. He was a graduate of DeWitt High School and received a Bachelor degree in Business Administration from Arkansas Polytechnic College, now Arkansas Tech University. He served in the U.S. Army from 1954-1956, which included a tour in Germany.

His work career included Universal CIT Credit Corporation in Little Rock. In 1959, he returned to DeWitt and married Barbara Cochran. He worked for the U.S. Postal Service during this time. Later he worked with DeWitt Shoe Corporation as office manager. He purchased a retail package store, Sportsman Liquor, which he operated for twenty years. He retired in 1998 after ten years with the Arkansas Department of Corrections - Cummins Unit as inmate grievance officer.

He was a member of the American Legion, Veteran of Foreign Wars, a past president of DeWitt Rotary Club, and a member of DeWitt First United Methodist Church where he had served on numerous committees.

He enjoyed the outdoors - hunting, fishing, and back yard vegetable

gardening. He also enjoyed reading, sports, and music. He had an outgoing personality and was a wonderful friend, as well as a devoted family man.

He was preceded in death by his parents and a son, John Gregory Gunnell.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Barbara; a daughter, Lee Ann Dietz and husband, Alex, of Heber Springs; son Steven Gunnell of DeWitt; granddaughter Rachel Gunnell; grandson Seth Gunnell; great-grandson James Kyle "Deuce" Ackerson II; step grandson, Donnie Dietz and wife, Christy; step-granddaughter Krysti Meins and husband, Chad; step great grandsons Donnie "Trey" Dietz and Ethan Dietz; a brother, Clarence Gunnell and his wife, Dottie of DeWitt; and nephews, John Howard and wife Linda, and Jeff and wife Michelle; and numerous cousins.

Pallbearers are John Howard Gunnell, Jeff Gunnell, Seth Gunnell, Donnie Dietz, Shawn Feemster, and Ryan Long.

Services will be held at the First United Methodist Church in DeWitt with Reverend Tony Hill officiating at 2 p.m. Thursday, July 21. Visitation will precede the service at 1 p.m. at the church and burial will follow at the DeWitt Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to First United Methodist Church, 608 S. Grandview Dr., DeWitt, AR 72042. Arrangements by Essex Funeral Home of DeWitt. www.essexfuneralhome.com

Tribute Wall

PB

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with each of you. He was such a nice gentleman...always had a big smile and great laugh.*

Pam Cunningham Bock - April 27, 2018 at 01:02 PM

CK

“ *Sending many prayers to the family. I have many sweet memories of being welcomed into the Gunnell family Johnny Lee and Ms. Barbara where always a joy to be around. I am sending prayers up for your peace. You have so many good memories & he will live on with each story you share. Sending big hugs, Carla*

Carla Kelley - April 27, 2018 at 01:02 PM

CS

“ *I am so sorry to hear this. I loved this man. He was such a wonderful person and he put up with a lot of mess from these old dragonettes! He attended every single game we played and even drove us when the weather was bad. Spook, I am keeping you in my thoughts and prayers and sending you much love. Ms. Barbara, my deepest sympathies and love. Steve, I am so sorry and have you in my thoughts and prayers. He was one of a kind and it didn't matter where I ran into him, I got a hug, a smile, and we got to visit. He will be greatly missed.*

Carma Shumake - April 27, 2018 at 01:02 PM

NW

“ *He was an amazing man. I am thankful to have known him. My love to Barbara, LeeAnn, Rachel and all the family.*

Nancy Williams - April 27, 2018 at 01:02 PM

RG

“ I'm to see the passing for Mr. Johnnie Lee. I have great memories of him during my youth. Prayers to all the family.

Ray Gilbert - April 27, 2018 at 01:02 PM

BC

“ Barbara, I am so sorry about Johnnie! Please know you are in my heart and prayers. I tried to call you recently but I must have gotten the wrong number. I will be in touch with you soon. Know that I am there in my heart. Bette and Ted Callaway

Bette Wright Callaway - April 27, 2018 at 01:02 PM

J(

“ Lee Ann and Alex So sorry to hear about the passing of your Dad. I lost my Dad two years ago and I know the deep loss and sadness. My heart goes out to you. May God's peace and the assurance of eternity with Him comfort you... Juliet

Juliet Furnier (Melton) - April 27, 2018 at 01:02 PM

SW

“ Dear LeeAnn, Alex, Rachel & family, I am so very sorry you've lost your Dad and Uncle. After reading his obituary he sounds like he was quite a guy which doesn't surprise me since I know you. My thoughts are prayers are with you guys. Best Wishes, Sue

Sue Wiese - April 27, 2018 at 01:02 PM

D(

“ Across many years and many miles - but memories of childhood friends of my family are special. Johnnie Lee and Barbara were such good and special friends to my parents. Condolences - please cherish your sweet memories.

Dody Cordes (Cook) - April 27, 2018 at 01:02 PM

BB

“ *Dear Barbara and family on behalf of Mary Ann Lancaster we are sending our love and prayers.*

Becky Bauman - April 27, 2018 at 01:02 PM