



Gerald Johnson

October 17, 1934 - January 21, 2020

Gerald Hart Johnson of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, died Tuesday, January 21, 2020, at his home at the age of 85.

He was born October 17, 1934, on his father's birthday, in Anna, Illinois, the only child of Dr. O.E. Johnson and Elsie Hartline Johnson. On May 6, 1956, he married Joyce Ann Aldridge of Wolf Lake, Illinois. She preceded him in death on January 9, 2005. He married Farris Bishop Newberry on July 1, 2006, in Houston, Texas. She preceded him in death on January 27, 2017.

He grew up in Anna, Illinois, graduating from Anna-Jonesboro Community High School in 1952. He obtained his college education at Southern Illinois University, and received his law degree from Vanderbilt University in 1959.

Gerald practiced law in Cape Girardeau for 47 years, from 1959 to 2006. He was a member of The Missouri Bar, Illinois State Bar Association, Cape Girardeau County Bar Association, and American Bar Association.

Gerald was actively involved in a variety of civic and charitable activities in the Cape Girardeau community. He was a long-time member of the Evening Optimist Club, where he served as president. He was heavily involved in the formation and development of the United Cerebral Palsy telethon at KFVS-TV in Cape Girardeau for many years. He participated in community affairs that

involved his three sons. These include: Youth Baseball; Cub Scouts; and Boy Scouts of America. He was a member of First Baptist Church in Cape Girardeau.

He is remembered for his friendly nature as a true gentleman who always had a smile and generous heart to all he met. A near-fatal 1955 auto accident hospitalized Gerald for 8 months, and with the help of his parents and future wife, he realized his new physical impairment need not be an obstacle to success. Gerald's zest and passion for life was never ending and so evident up until his final days. He was dearly loved and respected by his family.

He is survived by his three sons, Dr. Jonathan Johnson of Herrin, Illinois, Joseph Johnson of Cape Girardeau and Jason (Mary) Johnson of Chatham, Illinois; one grandson, Alexander (Kelsey) Johnson of Owensboro, Kentucky; and one granddaughter, Marissa Johnson of Chatham, Illinois.

He was preceded in death by his parents. There is no funeral or memorial service.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial contributions be made to the First Baptist Church of Cape Girardeau, 1289 Lexington Ave., Cape Girardeau, MO 63701; St. James A.M.E. Church, 516 North St., Cape Girardeau, MO 63701; or a charity of your choice.

Online condolences may be made at www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com.

Ford & Sons Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Tribute Wall

MS

“ Gerald was a great man and father. He will be missed.

My first memory of Gerald was in Alma Schrader auditorium while he was the area director of the scouts. I saw him often through years while growing up in Cape. Around 2005 he surprised me in San Antonio when he showed up at a downtown hotel we were renovating just to say hello and see what I was up to. I'm glad I was able to see him last summer at his home.

Mark Stevens - January 23, 2020 at 04:18 PM

KM

“ So sad to hear of his passing. Gerald was a real gentleman, a colleague, respected by his peers, a true professional, easy to work and get along with. An unpretentious person, he was honest, direct and straight-forward, the kind of person you wanted to embrace. He will be very much missed.

Ken McManaman - January 23, 2020 at 12:23 PM

TM

“ Sorry to hear about him passing away. Our firm often interacted with him and Eddie Downs , since we were neighbors next door, but always on friendly terms. I enjoyed visiting him at Sisco's when we were waiting for our haircuts, and always swapped stories about Cape. He will be missed. If there is anything we can do for you, just ask. Thomas M. Meyer

Thomas M. Meyer - January 23, 2020 at 10:20 AM

DN

“ JJ,
Sorry to hear of your loss, it sounds like your Dad lived a full and very rewarding life.

*Sincerely,
Doug Niswonger*

Doug Niswonger - January 23, 2020 at 09:26 AM

MH

“ *Wonderful man! Helped me many times. I will never forget!*

Mr. Kim Hindman - January 23, 2020 at 05:44 AM