



## Rodney Jerome Eddleman

September 3, 1928 - March 1, 2017

Rodney Jerome Eddleman, 88, of Cape Girardeau passed away at Southeast Missouri Hospital on March 1, 2017 after a brief illness.

He was born Sept. 3, 1928 in Delta, the sixth son and eleventh and last child of C. C. and Barbara A. Fulbright Eddleman. As he liked to claim, he came into the world on the same day as the opening of the old traffic bridge at Cape Girardeau. He counted among his ancestors many of the pioneer families of Cape Girardeau and Perry counties in Missouri. When he was 18 months old the family moved to Cape Girardeau, eventually renting a farm on South Kingshighway when he was 3. Here he grew up, playing with his older nephew, finding adventures with his rat terrier dog, hunting with his adored older brother Harley, and swimming and fishing in Ramsey Creek. His main chore was carrying water from the spring across the highway from the house where they lived, often to his dad and brothers working in the fields.

Rodney could also claim to be one of the last surviving people to work a crop with mules, when as a 12-year-old he was left as the only male in the household for a summer as World War II loomed. He often liked to relate how he couldn't reach high enough to harness the mules, so his mother had to help put on the harness before he went out to the fields. These experiences are included in the book, *That Son of a Gun Had Sense: Mule Stories from the Bootheel Area During the 1930's-1940's Era* by Lonny Thiele.

He started school at the old College Training School in 1934, later attended the former Marquette School, and graduated in 1945 from the former College High School. During high school he played American Legion baseball and was in Campster 4-H Club. Upon graduation, he enlisted in the U. S. Marine Corps. He proudly served in the 21st Marines, eventually rising to the rank of Master Sergeant. In the Marines, he learned radio and telephone operations, and was later an instructor in lineman school. When he was honorably discharged in 1949, he was able to find employment with the former Southeast Missouri Telephone Company as a lineman, and worked in that job through mergers and deregulation until his retirement from Southwest Bell 37 years later.

He met the love of his life, Glenda R. Deevers, at the old Hilltop dance club in Cape Girardeau in early 1951. They married Nov. 16, 1951 at Centenary Methodist Church in Cape, and remained a devoted and loving couple for the next 65+ years. After a year of marriage they built a house on Gordonville Road (now Independence St.), welcomed a son and then a daughter, and lived in the house for 36 years before moving just north of Cape.

Rodney loved working with his hands, and was an excellent wood worker. His hand-crafted box-style turkey calls are collector's items, and are featured in two books on turkey call makers. He carved over 400 of them in his lifetime. He loved gardening, deer and turkey hunting, reading, visiting with friends, and doing favors for people. One of his biggest frustrations in his later years was being unable to work outside and help people when they needed his skills.

Rodney was a member of the Marine Corps League, Telephone Pioneers, and NRA, and a strong practitioner of his Methodist faith.

He will be remembered by his children and grandson as a dad and grandpa

who was willing to do about anything for them, but who was by no means a pushover in discipline. If they got interested in something in or out of school, he learned about it so he could help out. If anyone was needed to assist with Boy Scouts (where he served as a "Den Mother"), school events, hobbies, support, advice, or anything else, he was there. His support, his ability to tell a great story, and his dry wit and sense of humor will be greatly missed.

Preceding him in death were his parents; his brothers Riley R. (Ruby J.), William H., Walter C. (Ann M.), Harley L. Sr. (Gladys O.), and Curtis C.; and his sisters Mrs. Vonna U. (Tony) Jones, Mrs. Verna M. (Cletus) Smith, Mrs. Vera M. (Joseph V.) Hobbs, Mrs. Enid E. (William H.) Breen, and Mrs. Gayneth E. (Edward) Ryan.

He is survived by his wife Glenda, son William R. (Hope E.) Eddleman, daughter Glenda Sue (Robert) Morrow, grandson Christopher P. (Christina R.) Eddleman, and great-grandson William John Eddleman. He also leaves a wide circle of nieces and nephews, friends, and former co-workers from A T & T.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the C. C. Eddleman Memorial Scholarship at Southeast Missouri State University Foundation, One University Plaza MS 7300, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701. This endowed scholarship was established for Criminal Justice students at Southeast in memory of Rodney's father, a former Cape Girardeau County Deputy Sheriff.

Funeral service will be Saturday, March 4, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. at Ford and Sons Mt. Auburn Chapel.

Visitation will be from 9:00 a.m. until the time of service.

Burial will follow with full military honors at Cape County Memorial Park Cemetery.

# Cemetery Details

## Cape County Memorial Park Cemetery

2315 Highway 61 North  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701  
(573) 334-1909  
<https://www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com/>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**MAR 4.** 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Ford & Sons Mt. Auburn Funeral Home  
1001 N. Mt. Auburn Rd.  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701  
(573) 334-1313  
[info@fordandsonsfuneralhome.com](mailto:info@fordandsonsfuneralhome.com)  
<https://www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com/>

## Service

**MAR 4.** 11:00 AM (CT)

Ford & Sons Mt. Auburn Funeral Home  
1001 N. Mt. Auburn Rd.  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701  
(573) 334-1313  
[info@fordandsonsfuneralhome.com](mailto:info@fordandsonsfuneralhome.com)  
<https://www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com/>

# Tribute Wall

CC

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with you Sue as you celebrate the life of your father and mourn his passing. May your memories give you peace. Carmen Cox*

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**carmen cox** - March 04, 2017 at 10:32 PM

MH

“ *Rodney was a very good friend, and one of the finest men I have ever met. Will miss his soft spoken voice. I shared many memories with him and Glenda. Rest in piece Rodney you will be missed. Mr. Kim Hindman 1-573-450-2739*

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**Mr. Kim Hindman** - March 04, 2017 at 06:46 AM

JH

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with you. With sincerest sympathy. Joan and Greg Howard*

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**Joan Howard** - March 03, 2017 at 04:57 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Rodney Jerome Eddleman.*



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March 02, 2017 at 08:17 PM