



Verlon R. "Jack" Tidwell

December 1, 1930 - April 24, 2019

Verlon R. "Jack" Tidwell, age 88, went to his heavenly home on April 24, 2019. He passed away at his Bella Vista, Arkansas residence.

Jack was born in Illmo, Missouri on December 1, 1930 to JV and Addie Mae Tidwell. The family moved to nearby Cape Girardeau, MO when he was 10 years old. Jack was the youngest with five siblings: Willis, Elberta, John, Sue, and Ruth. Parents, siblings, and their spouses predeceased Jack.

Jack had a passion for music and art. He said to tell everyone: "I love drawing and painting; I love woodworking; I love music; I love playing my trumpet and singing. I was very fortunate that God gave me the talents to do all these things".

His love for music began early. Jack enjoyed a sweet childhood and music filled teen years. He played the trumpet. He had his own popular combo by age 14. At age sixteen, Jack took the train to Saint Louis and auditioned for a West Coast big band led by Bob Shelton. Winning the audition and with a job offer in hand he returned to Cape. As he was packing his bag, his Mom came home and asked what he was doing. All excited he told her he was going to California to play for Shelton. She said, "No, you aren't going anyplace but to school tomorrow."...And that was that. (This incident highlights the level of his talent).

Music was his life. He played and marched in 2 high school bands: Central High and Saint Mary's, as well as playing in the SEMO University band. His music director entered him in several music contests which he won. He took Missouri State Championship the first time he went to State. Another honor, he was a member of the Golden Troopers (a drum and bugle corps) when they took a National title in Florida.

After high school graduation, Jack served in the US Air Force during the Korean War. As preparation to be a radar systems checker on the B 52 bomber, he was selected for Electronic Fundamentals Class: 64 enrollees and 8 graduates. Jack was one of the eight. This training was the foundation of his Engineering career with AT&T.

The trumpet went to the Air Force with Jack. Along with Air Force buddy, Alex Azar, they hitched a ride from Biloxi, Mississippi to New Orleans nearly every weekend. The two young Airmen would rent a room in the French Quarter for \$4.00 per night and spend the weekend going in and out of the different venues/bars playing with Jazz groups. Jack had the pleasure of playing with many of the greats: Dizzie Gillespie, Al Hirt, and Satchmo (Louis Armstrong) and others.

Returning home from the service Jack married the late Ella Fornkahl Tidwell. They had 30 years together and are the parents of six children: Jacque, Beverly, Mary, Janet, Linda and Ray.

Jack had a successful (nearly) forty year electronic engineering career with AT&T. He continued his trumpet playing as well as being an Adult Boy Scout leader for fifteen years. He mentored his son, Ray, through scouting from Indian Guides to Eagle Scout.

Jack married Alice Findley on July 4, 1987.

Retiring from AT&T on September 20, 1990, Jack and Alice moved to Bella Vista, Arkansas. There he had time to pursue his music, woodworking and art. He enjoyed playing in the Community Band and singing as a founding member of the Natural Statesman, (barbershop music). Both Jack and Alice became active members of Bella Vista Community Church.

Family and home, work and play, friends and pets were all important to Jack's life. Many times after sharing memories and laughter, Jack would say, "I've had a good life".

Left to cherish his affection and life stories are: wife, Alice; daughters, Jacque Williams, Beverly Eagan, Mary Throneberry, Janet Tidwell, Linda (Aaron) Sword; son, V. Ray (Tonya) Tidwell; 9 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren; niece, Dixie Eifert, other nieces and nephews; stepsons, Jay (Jennifer) and Matt (Kim) Pflugradt; 6 step-grandchildren, 3 step- great grandchildren; sister-in-law, Rev. Nancy Covington; grandsons, Chris and Jason Pflugradt were especially close.

A graveside service with full military honors will be Monday, April 29, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. at Cape County Memorial Park, Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

Cemetery Details

Cape County Memorial Park Cemetery

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

Tribute Wall



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is paid out by AT&T upon the Employee’s OR Retiree’s death. Call
the Call Center and they will work thru everything with you.
Contact Fidelity as well on 800.835.5097*

Louise Fulton - June 11, 2019 at 11:56 AM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the
family of Verlon R. "Jack" Tidwell.*



April 27, 2019 at 03:06 PM