

Obituaries



TOP

Wilbur L. Thornton

NOVEMBER 28TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Wilbur L. Thornton

Wilbur L. Thornton was ushered with prayer to his forever home Friday, November 27, 2015 by family and friends who surrounded him at his home of 18 years in Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

A Malden, Missouri native, Wilbur lived a life of service. While residing and raising a family in Malden, he contributed in numerous ways to that community, serving on the Malden School Board for 16 years, the Civil Air Patrol, Volunteer Fire Department, Auxiliary Police, and as an EMT for Dunklin County.

He was also an avid weather watcher, basketball referee, and church deacon. His 50+ years with the United States Postal Service began in Malden as a 19 year old mail carrier. He was Postmaster there until transferring to Poplar Bluff in the 1990's.

Wilbur left just as big of an impression in Poplar Bluff. He served as Postmaster there until being promoted to Manager of Postal Operations for the Southeast Missouri Region, overseeing 180 post offices. But his name may be most recognized as "The Voice of the Raiders" for his 24 years of broadcasting Three Rivers Raiders basketball games. He also served a six year term on the Three Rivers College Board of Trustees. In every professional role he played, he carried his reputation for being a positive encourager.

Wilbur's strongest desire, though, was to live a life that glorified God. In his professional life, civic involvements, or in the unique way he sang from his heart and visited people in the hospital, his love for the Lord shone. He was a huge supporter of international mission

projects through General Baptist Ministries, seeing himself as a giver, sender, and supporter.

Most assuredly, Wilbur leaves a legacy of love for his family. He is survived by his wife and best friend of 18 years, Patti Thornton; a son, Doug Thornton (Debbie); a daughter, Julie Rice(Dennis); grandchildren, Leah Walker (Dusty), Will Thornton (Karen), and Kayla VonRuden (Zac); great-grand daughter, Ruby Grace Thornton; step sons Christopher Clinton and Joshua Clinton; and brother, Bill Thornton; a sister, Wanna VanCleve; and a great-niece very close to him, Cassie VanCleve Pinkerton.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Lilly McKenzie Thornton, his father, Wade Houston Thornton, and a brother, Wade Thornton.

Visitation will be held at Fellowship General Baptist Church from 5-7 P.M. Sunday, November 29.

All are welcome to join the family for a Celebration of Wilbur's Life at the same location at 1:00 P.M. Monday, November 30 with Rev. Byron Beck officiating. Interment will follow at Memorial Park Cemetery in Malden.

In lieu of flowers, gifts may be made to the Wilbur Thornton Memorial Fund at Ozark Federal Credit Union or General Baptist Women's Ministries; both mission outreach funds.

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