

Obituaries



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In Memory of Belinda Joyce Lay

NOVEMBER 25TH 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

In Memory of Belinda Joyce Lay

Belinda Joyce Lay, daughter of the late Jimmy Sartin and Joyce Stoveall Jones, was born on November 11, 1950 in Sikeston, Missouri and departed this life on November 21, 2020 at her residence in Dexter, Missouri at the age of 70 years.

Mrs. Lay attended Temple Baptist Church in Sikeston and was a homemaker.

On November 1, 1968, in Sikeston, Missouri, she was united in marriage to Jerry Lay. Mr. Lay survives of their home in Dexter.

In addition to her husband Jerry, she is survived by her son, Robert Lay and his wife Jennifer of Dexter; by four grandchildren, Ashley Lay, Brittani Lay, Jordan Lay, and Matthew Dobbs; and by many great-grandchildren.

Visitation will be held at Mathis Funeral Home in Dexter on Tuesday, November 24, 2020 from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.

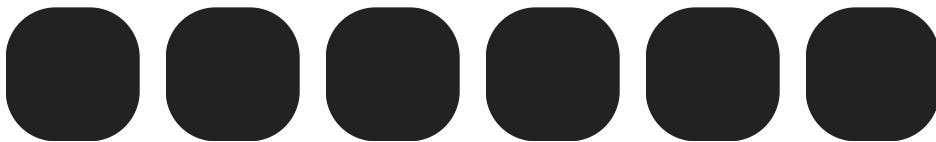
Funeral services will then be conducted in the Mathis Funeral Chapel on Tuesday, November 24, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. with Rev. Tim Russell officiating.

Interment will follow in the Missouri State Veterans Cemetery in Bloomfield on Monday, November 30, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.

Mathis Funeral Home in Dexter is in charge of arrangements.

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In Memory of Jeffery Deon Laird

NOVEMBER 24TH 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

[In Memory of Jeffery Deon Laird](#)

Jeffery Deon Laird, son of Wilma Menley Rodgers and the late Laverne Leo Laird, was born on January 25, 1964 in Dexter, Missouri and departed this life on November 21, 2020 at his residence in Dexter, at the age of 56 years.

Mr. Laird was a truck driver and a mechanic.

On February 3, 1984, in Dexter, Missouri, he was united in marriage to Tina Jameson. She survives.

He is survived by his mother and step-father, Wilma Rodgers and Bill Casey of Dexter; by three sons, Robert Finch and his wife Tabitha of Dexter, Jeffery Laird Jr. and his wife Chelsea of Dexter, and Jordan Laird of Dexter; by his daughter, Angela Allen and her husband Bill of Broseley; by four brothers, Donald Laird and his wife Alice of Dexter;

Randy Laird and his wife Charlene of Dexter, Jerry Grimes and his wife Paula of Tennessee, and Robert Grimes and his wife Shawne of Essex; by two sisters, Leola Laird of Poplar Bluff and Karen Fauller of Hillsboro; and by four grandchildren, Matthew Finch, Makayla Finch, Gavin Allen and Liam Laird.

Visitation will be held at Mathis Funeral Home in Dexter on Wednesday, November 25, 2020 from 9:30 a.m. until 10:30 a.m.

A memorial service will then be conducted in the Mathis Funeral Chapel on Wednesday, November 25, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.

Mathis Funeral Home in Dexter is in charge of arrangements.

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In Memory of Stephen Ford Schaefer

NOVEMBER 24TH 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

In Memory of Stephen Ford Schaefer

Stephen Ford Schaefer, died Friday, November 20, 2020, at age 73, following health issues, worsened by COVID. Heaven and our good Lord welcomed him as he joined his deceased loved ones, daughter Lisa, mother Susan, father Paul, and sister Sue.

Loved by many, Steve leaves his son Michael and daughter-in-law Amber; their seven children O'Shen, Skila, Montana, Zach, Lakelynn, Brelynn, and Declan; great-granddaughter Winsley; brothers Paul, John, Stan, and Don; son-in-law Bobby; and granddaughter Sydney; as well as many nieces and nephews.

Born and raised in Sykesville, Maryland, during his lifetime Steve also resided in Florida and California.

Steve worked in aerospace fastener manufacturing most of his career, retiring early for health reasons.

As a favorite family member with a great sense of humor and quiriness, and lots of love for everyone, Steve shared his joy for life on many memorable occasions with son Michael and his family, who lived nearby; and for many years, he visited California every year to see his brothers, nieces and nephews. Steve was a traveler and the world revolved around his grandchildren.

Steve Schaefer will be greatly missed by all who knew him. Rest in peace, dear father, brother, grandfather and Uncle Steve.

Mathis Funeral Home in Dexter is in charge of arrangements.

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In Memory of Mary Alice Swinger

NOVEMBER 24TH 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

In Memory of Mary Alice Swinger

Mary Alice Swinger, daughter of the late James Reaves and Laura Alberson Reaves, was born on December 11, 1932 in New Madrid County, Missouri, and departed this life on November 20, 2020 at Poplar Bluff Regional Medical Center in Poplar Bluff, Missouri, at the age of 87 years.

Mrs. Swinger was a former nurse's aide and a homemaker. She was a member of the Essex Church of Christ and a resident of Dexter.

In 1955, she was first united in marriage to Elvis Leon Johnson. They were married for sixteen years and to this union eight children were born. She was then united in marriage to Otis Swinger on December 1, 1979, in Marble Hill, Missouri. Mr. Swinger preceded her in death on February 13, 2013.

She is survived by two sons, David Johnson of Bloomfield and Ron Johnson of Poplar Bluff; by her step-son, Jack Johnson and wife Helen of Byron, Illinois; by four daughters, Betty Black and husband Johnny of Bloomfield, Debra Ward and husband Richard of Dexter, Dana Kneiss and husband James of Poplar Bluff, and Melissa Moore and husband Tim of Holcomb, by her step-daughter, Mary Ellen Williams of Kennett; by her sister, Bernice Reaves-Goss of Belleville, Illinois; by eighteen grandchildren and twenty-six great-grandchildren.

Other than by her husbands and parents, she was preceded in death by two sons, Danny Johnson and Darwin Johnson; by two step-sons, Darrell Swinger and Paul Swinger; by her step-daughter, Phyllis Ward; by two brothers, James Albert Reaves and James Gilbert Reaves; and by two sisters, Freda Reaves-Floyd and Amanda Faye Reaves-Dempsey.

Visitation will be held at Mathis Funeral Home in Dexter on Monday, November 30, 2020 from 1:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m.

Funeral services will then be conducted in the Mathis Funeral Chapel on Monday, November 30, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. with Herman Morse officiating.

Interment will follow in the Missouri State Veterans Cemetery in Bloomfield.

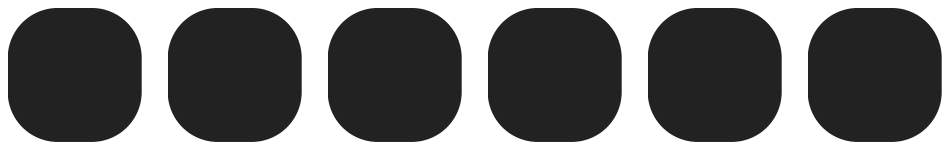
Memorials may be made to the Paragould Children's Home Inc., 5515 Walcott Road, Paragould, Arkansas 72450-3319 or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, Tennessee 38101.

Mathis Funeral Home in Dexter is in charge of arrangements.

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In Memory of Carl Austin Townsend (1934-2020)

NOVEMBER 21ST 2020 BY STAFF WRITER

In Memory of Carl Austin Townsend (1934-2020)

Carl Townsend was born in 1934 to James and Myrtle Townsend in Fisk, Missouri. He was one of 11 siblings that reached adulthood. After deciding to leave high school early, Carl joined the Air Force and was stationed overseas on a couple of occasions. During the summer of 1954, while back in the US on leave, he and his brother decided to stop in at Frosty's Drive-thru for a root beer float. It was this decision that began a seven decade love affair with our mother, who was working as a carhop at Frosty's. After dating for about a year, he and Mom were married in Hernando, MS. They were in the Air Force for about 18 months and upon leaving the service, Dad enrolled at SEMO St in Cape Girardeau, Mo.

After graduation from SEMO St, Dad got his first coaching and teaching job at St Mary's HS. After leaving there, Dad was hired as the Principal and Coach at Qulin, MO. In the fall on 1967, Dad was hired to be the principal at Malden HS in Malden, MO. It was at Malden that Dad really shaped and helped mold the lives of thousands of young men and women. While working as the Principal at Malden HS, Dad also continued his education. He ended up with his BSE, Masters and Specialist degrees.

That's not too bad for a young man that dropped out of high school his junior year. Besides being the HS principal, Dad also officiated HS basketball games in the Bootheel of MO. And he did this so well that on multiple occasions he had the number 1 rating for basketball officials in the state of Missouri as rated by the coaches. Dad called numerous state championship game over the years as a result of his high ratings. When he wasn't calling basketball games during the fall each year, Dad was quail hunting. As any of the farmers in the Malden area will tell you, Dad would hit the fields anytime he could find a spare couple of hours.

After twenty two years as principal, Dad finished out his career at Malden as the Superintendent of the Malden School District. The year after Dad retired, Dad was honored by the MSHSAA for a Lifetime Achievement Award in Hearn's Field House in Columbia, Mo. It was an honor well deserved and earned.

After retiring from Malden HS, Dad worked for Shelton Office machines for several years and Dad also began to participate in missionary trips each year. Dad went to Haiti, Mexico and the Dominican Republic on multiple occasions to help spread God's word and to share his testimony. My father was a man of faith in that he lived his life like he felt the Bible told him to live it. He felt that having faith in Lord was the only way to truly live one's life each day and that by doing this maybe he could help someone else find the

peace that he had in his life.

My father is survived by his wife of over 65 years, Dorothy, sons Carl Jr (Monica) and John David (Judy). He and Mom have 11 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. He is also survived by his brother, Pete Townsend, Jackson Mo and his sisters Emma Lou Hobbs of Jonesboro, Ar and Joanne Horn of Farmington, Mo.

Dad was preceded in death by his daughter, Judy Lynne Curtis and 7 of his siblings. A service will be held in Malden, MO, on Sat Dec 5th at 1 pm. The service will be held at the Malden HS gymnasium. Due to current Covid situation, the family is asking that everyone attending please wear a mask or face covering and please practice social distancing. There will not be a memorial sign in book and there will not be a receiving line due to the current situation. Doors will open around 12:15.

For those that cannot attend, the Malden R-I School District will be live streaming the service on the their Facebook page. Go to Malden R-I and 'follow' the page. On Sat, Dec 5th you will be notified that the event is online and available for viewing.

In Lieu of flowers, donations made be made to the following charity:

Seed to Root Ministries - S2R

This organization helps recovering addicts, thru the use of the Gospel find the ability to reenter society and become contributing members to our communities. Dad felt very strongly about the power of prayer to help heal people and families. Please look them up on Facebook if you would like to honor Dad with a contribution to this charity.

Donations can be made at <http://www.seedtorootministries.com/>.

Our family would like to express our appreciation to Landess Funeral Home and the Malden R-I Administration and Board for all of their help in honoring Dad.

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