



LEE
GENTRY
RUSSELL

Lee Gentry Russell

Sunrise: October 27, 1929

Sunset: January 13, 2014

Saturday, January 25, 2014

~ 12:00 Noon ~

TRUELIGHT BAPTIST CHURCH
1535 Tudor Avenue | East St. Louis, Illinois
Reverend Timothy Chambers, *Pastor*

Pastor Fred Hendricks, *Officiating*
Alton Bible Church

TRIBUTES

FROM A GRATEFUL DAUGHTER

How is it possible to find words which adequately describe the hurt which comes from losing someone who meant so much to me my entire life? You not only gave me life but were there for me during all my ups as well as my downs. You were much more than just a dad. You were the greatest friend and confidant that a daughter could have. You were the person who not only shared in and was proud of my greatest triumphs, but was not judgmental and always supportive and helpful during my darkest hours. There are no words to describe the love and admiration that I have for you so I won't even try. I will just say that your laughter, infectious personality and wisdom will be sorely missed and I have always been proud to call you DADDY!

Love you forever,
Leann



Dad,
Your love and ability to teach and challenge me to hunt, know the proper use of weapons, fish, swim, water ski, trap and skeet shoot, developed me into a cross country and track hall of famer. Sports are what we do and who we are. Thank you for teaching me the Russell way.

Love, Vince "Ben"



ORDER OF SERVICE

- The Prelude
- The Processional..... Pastor Fred Hendricks
Alton Bible Church
- Special MusicMr. Bob Ellison
"Wind Beneath My Wings"
- The Invocation..... Pastor Fred Hendricks
- The Scripture..... Reverend Levi King
Gateway Area Bible Fellowship
Romans 8:28
- Special MusicMrs. Marceline Adams Taggart
"Amazing Grace"/"His Eye is on the Sparrow" Medley
- Acknowledgement of All
Expressions of Sympathy.....Mrs. Sandra Hendricks
A Special Condolence.....Ms. Diane Patton Hudson
- Life's Reflections Soft Music
- Remarks:
Honorable Alvin L. Parks, Jr.
Reverend Levi King
Mr. Joe Hubbard
Reverend Johnny Scott
Mr. Ronald L. Jones
- Special MusicMr. Bob Ellison
"I'll Fly Away"
- The Eulogy Pastor Fred Hendricks
- The Closing Prayer..... Reverend Johnny Scott
- The Recessional Led by Pastor Fred Hendricks

ORDER OF SERVICE

THE INTERMENT
Holy Cross Cemetery
Fairview Heights, Illinois

THE REPAST
Immediately following the Interment
Truelight Baptist Church
Fellowship Hall

LIFE'S REFLECTIONS

Lee Gentry Russell, the youngest of three sons, was born to the Reverend Ray Vester Russell and Bonnie (Morris) Russell on October 27, 1929 in Sullivan, Indiana. Both of his parents, and his brothers, Robert "Bob" Louis Russell, Sr. and Morris Ray Russell, preceded him in death.

Lee was reared in a rather structured, yet loving Christian household embraced with strict values and morals from a very early age. As a young child, Lee accepted Christ and attended Terre Haute Gospel Chapel. Although he was nurtured in this type of environment, his parents recognized that *boys would be boys* and needed outlets to grow into upstanding, well rounded adults. Lee's father, Ray Russell, introduced his sons to the joys and adventures of hunting and fishing which they thoroughly enjoyed and continued throughout their lives. In fact, Lee owned a very beautiful and powerful boat, which traveled various lakes around the country for fishing, water skiing, and other water sporting events. Reluctantly, he parted with his cherished boat this past summer due to his declining health.

Lee attended the public schools in Sullivan, Indiana, graduating from Sullivan High School in 1947. Lee was a very good student, a star football player, and was well known and liked by students and teachers alike.

Upon graduating from high school, Lee began his career in the funeral industry. He joined ventures with his older brother Bob, who by this time helped to establish the Green-Russell Funeral Home in Terre Haute, Indiana. Together, Lee and Bob established The Russell Funeral Home.

Lee took a short break from the funeral industry to serve his country in the US Army during the height of the Korean War (May 1951). He attended military leadership school at Fort Riley, Kansas and encountered combat in Korea as an infantryman. He was honorably discharged from military service in February 1953, having attained the rank of Sergeant (E-5).

Upon separation from the US Army, Lee continued his professional development by attending the Indiana College of Mortuary Science (ICMS) in Indianapolis and graduated at the top of his class in September 1955. Due to his academic standing and level of advanced technical skills in the art and science of embalming that he acquired later in his career, he was selected as an adjunct instructor of students at Southern Illinois University and Forrest Park College of Mortuary Science. Lee Russell was very proud and honored to work in the field of mortuary science and worked tirelessly to pass down the pride and honor that he felt to future morticians.

Upon graduation, he continued to work for a mortuary in Indianapolis doing specialized work for three morticians. His services were in such

LIFE'S REFLECTIONS

high demand due to his works of art on severe trauma cases. While working in Indianapolis, he met and married Lewana Hill in 1955. From this union, two children were born; Ray Vincent and Leann Marie.

In 1960, Lee moved his family to East St. Louis, Illinois, accepting a position with Officer Funeral Home. He continued perfecting his skills and development as a director, manager, and master embalmer for 17 years. During his tenure at Officer Funeral Home, he met and married Dorothy J. Tharp who passed in 1990.

Having an entrepreneurial spirit, Russell partnered with Albert P. Ransom to establish Russell-Ransom Funeral Directors in East St. Louis in 1977. After several years, this business became Russell Memorial Chapel with Lee Russell as president and sole proprietor. Lee continued to manage the business and operations of Russell Memorial Chapel until 1991 when he began work in a more limited capacity. Due to his reduced involvement and exhaustion with the extreme cold weather in Illinois, Russell moved to Atlanta, Georgia in 2005 to be closer to his immediate family. He continued the activities he so loved, such as boating, fishing, and golfing in Atlanta to the extent that his health would permit.

Quietly and peacefully, with his son and daughter by his side, Lee G. Russell entered into eternal rest on Monday, January 13, 2014, 6:00 p.m. at his earthly home in Jonesboro, Georgia. His jovial personality and zest for life are admirable traits which will be direly missed by those left to mourn his passing: an adoring daughter, Leann Marie Russell (Darnell) Keepler, Jonesboro, Georgia; a caring son, Ray Vincent Russell, Atlanta, Georgia; a special godson, Lucius Walker; a daughter, Cathe (Kenneth) Allen, Seattle, Washington; a loving granddaughter, Taylor Leann Keepler, Jonesboro, Georgia; a grandson, Jarett Lee Russell, St. Louis, Missouri; a granddaughter, Kia-Rae Allen, Seattle, Washington; a very endeared friend, Ms. Elizabeth Russell, Terre Haute, Indiana; a dear friend, Ms. Ruth Clayborne, East St. Louis, Illinois; and numerous other relatives and friends, including the staff of Russell Memorial Chapel.

Professional and Private Affiliations:

Illinois Funeral Directors Association

St. Louis Gateway Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association

The Embalmers Supply Company

National Rifle Association of America

St. Clair County Funeral Directors Association

National Funeral Directors Association

Distinctive Service Award from the Illinois Funeral Directors Association (IFDA) in 2009 for recognition of more than forty years of honorable service to the funeral profession and service to humanity.

PALLBEARERS

Mr. Greg Majors
Mr. Paul J. Russell
Mr. Michael Rush

Mr. Lucius Walker
Mr. Edward Officer
Mr. Harvey Keeper

FLOWER BEARERS

St. Clair County Funeral Directors Association
East St. Louis Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

HONORARY PALLBEARERS

Mr. Leonard N. Brown
Mr. Lenora Townsend
Mr. George Carper, Sr.
Mr. Thomas Lumpkin
Mr. Carl Hall



Services Entrusted to:

Russell Memorial Chapel
7916 State Street
East St. Louis, Illinois

Assisted by Mr. Greg Majors
The Russell Funeral Home
Terre Haute, Indiana

Assisted by Ms. M. Bernadette Officer
Officer Funeral Home P. C.
East St. Louis, Illinois

FOOTPRINTS

*One night I had a dream—
I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord
and across the sky flashed scenes from my life.
For each scene I noticed two sets of footprints,
one belonged to me and the other to the Lord.
When the last scene of my life flashed before me,
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.
I noticed that many times along the path of my life,
there was only one set of footprints.
I also noticed that it happened at the very lowest
and saddest times in my life.
This really bothered me and I questioned the Lord about it.
“Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you,
you would walk with me all the way,
but I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life
there is only one set of footprints.
“I don’t understand why in times when I needed you most,
you should leave me.”
The Lord replied, “My precious, precious child,
I love you and I would never, never leave you
during your times of trial and suffering.
“When you saw only one set of footprints,
it was then that I carried you.”*



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The family of Lee G. Russell extends thanks to each of you for the kindness shown during our bereavement. We are grateful to Pastor Fred Hendricks and Truelight Baptist Church for the services granted to meet our every need. We extend special thanks to Amicasa Hospice and Home Care, Stockbridge, Georgia for caring for our dear father unconditionally. Eternal appreciation is extended to Greg Majors, The Russell Funeral Home, Ruth Clayborne, Russell Memorial Chapel, and Ms. M. Bernadette Officer, Officer Funeral Home, P.C. for the professional and dedicated services provided to Leann and Ray Vincent.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT