



Ralph Miner

July 15, 1930 - December 22, 2014

Ralph Miner, 83, passed away peacefully Monday morning, December 22, 2014. Ralph was born on July 15, 1930 to Leonard Miner, who died in 1971, and Bertha Collier Miner, who died of typhoid fever when Ralph was only two. He was raised by his father and his aunts, Zella (Hilbig) and Maye (Thompkins), on Wallens Creek, less than a mile from his birthplace on Powell Mountain. He attended Sand Spring School and graduated from Jonesville High School in 1947. Until his illness, he faithfully attended his class's annual reunions.

Ralph was saved as a young man and spent the rest of his life bringing the news of God's salvation through his testimony and his singing of gospel music and playing his Martin guitar. For many years, he served the folks who attended Roller's Chapel Methodist Church on Wallens Creek. Later in life he attended the Cool Branch Baptist Church in Sneedville, Tennessee, and is currently a member of the Jonesville United Methodist Church in Jonesville, Virginia.

Ralph started working at Powell Valley Electric Cooperative (PVEC) at the age of 18 as a lineman. By 1963, he had worked his way up through the ranks and became the manager. Ralph devoted more than 43 years of his life to the members of the cooperative who live in Lee, Hancock, Claiborne, and portions of Wise, Scott, Hawkins, and Granger Counties in Virginia and Tennessee

until his retirement in 1993.

During those years, he served on numerous boards and was awarded many tributes, including serving as a member of the Mountain Empire Community College Foundation Board where he championed the important cause of providing higher education to everyone. His interest in his fellow man was perhaps best reflected in one of his favorite activities, which was seeking out and writing the stories of the hundreds of people who were introduced monthly to the readers of The Tennessee Magazine and Cooperative Living Magazine center section. Several of those articles have been reprinted in nationally known publications. He loved to tell a good story!

He served his community in numerous capacities but his proudest achievements were being a founding director of the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission, and the creation of the Duffield Industrial Park in Duffield, Virginia. The benefits of the Industrial Park can be seen in the many industries and jobs that exist there today, including the business of his son-in-law Paul and grandson Ryan.

Ralph lost Anne (Rutherford), his soul mate, the mother of his children, and his one and only true love, to cancer after just 26 years of marriage. During many of those years, they could be heard singing gospel music on the radio and at funeral services, and later Ralph sang in the group Lois and the Virginians.

Ralph is survived by daughter, Rhonda Elswick and husband Paul Elswick; son Steve Miner and wife Brenda Garton; and three grandchildren: Ryan Elswick and his partner Colby Hurd, Whitney Elswick-Knudson and her husband Matthew Knudson, and his youngest grandchild, Cameron Elswick. Ralph is also survived by his former wife, Margee, and cousins, children of his Aunt Zella, living in Georgia and Ohio. Special lifelong friends that survive him

are Dallas Shoun and Neil Gilley.

Family will receive friends Tuesday December 23rd at the Jonesville United Methodist Church in Jonesville, Virginia from 5:00PM to 7:00PM with service immediately to follow at 7:00. Burial will be at 10:00AM Wednesday, Christmas Eve, in Lee Memorial Gardens. Everyone is asked to meet at the church by 9:30 Wednesday to travel in procession to the cemetery. Pallbearers will be Danny Rutherford, Eddie Rutherford, Alan Rutherford, Jay Adams, Matthew Knudson, and Colby Hurd. Honorary Pallbearers are Dallas Shoun and Neil Gilley.

Ralph would be pleased if his memory is celebrated through your contributions to the Jonesville United Methodist Church [100 Church St., Jonesville, Virginia 24263], to The Ralph B. Miner Scholarship at Mountain Empire Community College Foundation, [MECC Foundation Inc, 3441 Mountain Empire Road, Big Stone Gap, Virginia 24219 - <http://www.meccfoundation.org>] or to the perpetual upkeep of the Bledsoe Cemetery on Wallens Creek where many of his family and friends are buried.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC **23**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Jonesville First United Methodist Church
Church Street
Jonesville, VA 24263

Funeral service

DEC **23**. 7:00 PM (ET)

Jonesville First United Methodist Church
Church Street
Jonesville, VA 24263

Tribute Wall



“ *Ralph Miner*

October 05, 2023 at 07:31 PM



“ *This is from Mabel Johnson Halverson, Ralph's first cousin. My favorite memory is when we all got together at my mother's, (Bessie Johnson) house after my mother passed away. We got to know each other again and Ralph and my husband, (Art) became good friends and began writing back and forth to keep in touch. If possible, can someone in the family contact me? I would love to catch up and get to know you all. 423-438-4434*

Mabel Johnson Halverson - May 19, 2015 at 08:41 PM



“ *Clockhart lit a candle in memory of Ralph Miner*



clockhart - December 25, 2014 at 06:39 AM



I have known Ralph and all the family all my life. He will always be in my heart. He was so good to come visit my family. my prayers will always be with the family.

clockhart - December 25, 2014 at 06:43 AM

PC

“ *Ralph will be terribly missed here on Wallens Creek. He and Anne were our closest neighbors growing up and have fond memories of them both. Steve, Rhonda and families are in my thoughts and prayers. RIP Ralph. Phyllis Marcum Hurd*

Phyllis Marcum Cely-Hurd - December 23, 2014 at 07:58 AM

PB

“ *I got to know Ralph several years back really well. I had always known of him and he was a known well by my family. I sold a place I owned and need somewhere to live until I found a place I wanted to live. I have a friend who had logged on Ralph's property and I use to go up on the mountain while he had been logging and fell in love with a house that Ralph owned up there where it was not close to anything but nature. So I called Ralph and asked him if he would rent the house to me until I decide what I was going to do so Ralph said yes. I moved up on the mountain and became close friends with Ralph. He was a very kind man and he was very knowledgeable about the history of our area. I would sit and listen to these storys and think he should write a book because with him gone so would be the history. Ralph told me sometime after I had lived on the mountain that he thought my friend was moving up there with me and when he found out it was just me a young woman that it would be hard on me with getting in fire wood and living so far removed but he said I sure had fooled him that I could do anything a man could do and he was proud of me. Ralph was a geat man I thought the world of him and will miss him. Trish Bruner*



Patricia Bruner - December 22, 2014 at 07:58 PM