



Willie "Ray" Taylor

March 16, 1931 - January 23, 2022

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I can do all things through Christ our Lord who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13 and strengthen he did throughout his almost 91 years on this earth. Willie Ray Taylor, known as Ray to all clients, family and friends during his time on this earth, was also known as a true servant of the Lord. He spent 9 decades of working hard, loving life, fishing and gardening as a son, brother, husband, father and grandfather to three, Brienna Rae Kirkpatrick and Cole Alan Kirkpatrick born to daughter Connie Taylor Kirkpatrick and husband Brad of Brush Prairie Washington and Mark Anthony Taylor born to son Mark Taylor of Franklinton Louisiana. Ray's children, grandchildren and countless nieces and nephews will surely grieve over his loss but smile often as they remember one of his countless jokes and his infectious smile. Ray was active in the Bethel community until Barbara fell ill, but one of the fondest memories of Ray is all the children knew he had an endless supply of peppermint candy or a quarter in his pocket for each and every one of them after church. He continued the peppermint tradition for the staff members at every one of his doctor's visits.

Ray went home to be with his precious Lord on January 23, 2022, after being preceded in death by his loving wife of over 61 years, Barbara Ann LeBlanc Taylor when she herself took that peaceful journey into the arms of her savior

on July 19, 2017. Ray is preceded in death by not only Barbara, but he was the last of twelve Taylor children born to hardworking sharecroppers John and Lillie Mae Taylor; Andrew, Frank, Alma, Nora, Mamie, Viola, Benton, twins Eddie and Lettie and Devon.

Ray was known not only by his enduring faith but as the hardest working man in Washington Parish starting at Burris Farms before learning his lifelong trade as a master mechanic in Okinawa Japan while serving in the military. Ray went on to work with Smith Gravel and furthered his mechanic skills as an instructor at the Crowley State Education Program, mechanic at Smith and Smith Tractor and finally opening his own successful business in Franklinton, Taylors Tractor Repair. Many farmers and landowners in and around the state have benefitted from Ray's expertise in repairing and restoring tractors and those same skills endure today in the second-generation business, Taylor Tractor Repair owned and operated by his son Mark Taylor. These same restored mechanical wonders are visible every year during the Washington Parish Free Fair along with many of the relocated and restored homes, cabins and buildings in the Mile Branch Settlement that the Taylor family helped to restore while enjoying the countless visitors to the fair as a family.

It was Ray and Barbara's love of the fair and Mile Branch Settlement that prompted Ray's loved ones to urge those interested in expressing their sympathy for Ray and Barbara's passing, to make a donation to the Mile Branch Settlement in the name of Ray and Barbara Taylor. Donations can be made through The Washington Parish Fair, a 501c3 charitable organization and mailed to P.O. Box 574, Franklinton, LA 70438, with the following memo: Mile Branch Settlement in memory and honor of Ray & Barbara Taylor.

The family will honor Ray's wishes to not conduct a formal service to say goodbye at this time in light of Covid but would like to extend their heartfelt gratitude to his devoted caregiver Rachel Gill and nurse Mandi Boyd for the

past several years of unselfish service and Pepper Van Norman, the ladies of D&D Sitting Service and Community Care Hospice for the loving care provided to him so he could be home in his last days.

Rest in peace my good and faithful servant and as his niece Pam Taylor Ball said..."I guess Bennie and Ray are in the woods hunting birds once again."

Tribute Wall

EK

“*Connie, Mark, and family, I'm so sorry for your loss. He was a fine Christian gentleman and our wonderful neighbor for years. May you be comforted knowing you will see him again one day.*”

Edna Kennedy - January 28, 2022 at 11:26 AM