



James Wray Bush

April 21, 1935 - March 20, 2023

James Wray Bush, born April 21st, 1935 in Magee, MS passed from this life on Monday, March 20th, 2023 at Forrest General Hospital at the age of 87.

He graduated from George S Gardner High School in 1952 and from Mississippi State University in 1956 where he received a Bachelor of Business and was a member of the Kappa Sigma Fraternity. He met the love of his life while in college and married Shirley Lee Pickett on August 19th, 1956. They were married for 66 wonderful years!!

He was preceded in death by his parents A.A. and Lillian Bush and his brothers, Arnold A. Bush and Harry H. Bush.

In addition to his loving wife Shirley, James Wray is survived by his son, Mike (Cynthia) of Laurel, MS; daughter, Leann Pearson (Kyle) of Fairview, TX; his sister-in-law Nancy Guice. He is also survived by his five grandchildren; Kathryn Davis (Matthew), Jennifer Bush, Lauren Haynes (Alex), Taylor Pearson, Harrison Pearson (Shannon) and his four great grandchildren; Thomas Wray Davis, Joshua Davis, Hendrix Haynes and Hattie Haynes.

James Wray was only 26 years old when he took over Bush Construction Company with his brother Harry and cousin Latrelle after the passing of his father. Under their leadership they saw it grow into one of the largest

construction companies in Mississippi. He became a pillar in the construction world serving on the board of the American Road Builders Association as their Senior Vice President and was the President Director of the Mississippi Road Builders. His success in business led to his involvement and operation of many other successful ventures and board appointments such as Community Bank to which he proudly sat as a director for many years. He loved his country and was proud to serve in the National Guard Reserve.

James Wray truly had a big heart for his community where he served on numerous boards including the Laurel Country Club and Lauren Rogers Museum of Art. He was an active member of First Trinity Presbyterian Church where he would often be found in the kitchen cooking for the masses any one of his amazing dishes including his famous gumbo.

He and Shirley had many wonderful trips all over the world oftentimes in their motorhome making lasting memories with friends and family. However, one of their favorite destinations was their beautiful beach home in Perdido Key, FL for their 4th of July Bush Family Reunions. The reunions truly brought James Wray the greatest joy to have all the family together for food, fellowship, and of course fishing on his boat, the Big Daddy.

Big Daddy, as he was known to many, loved celebrations and being able to entertain more than anything. His optimism and joy was contagious to everyone he met. He loved life, his family, God, and his church. He valued hard work and still found pleasure in going to the office every day. His bright light and smile was memorable to everyone he met. The family would like for everyone to show their love and celebrate him by wearing bright colors.

Services will be held on Saturday, March 25th, 2023 at First Trinity Presbyterian Church in Laurel, MS. Visitation at 10:00 am, Funeral Service at 11:00 am, and burial to follow at Lake Park Cemetery. Pallbearers will be

Andrew Bush, David Bush, Stephen Bush, Matthew Davis, David Dodd, Kris Holifield, Harrison Pearson and Taylor Pearson.

In lieu of flowers, the family respectfully requests memorial donations be made to the Shirley P and James Wray Bush Pancreatic Cancer Research & Education Fund at Ochsner's Department of Philanthropy, 1514 Jefferson Hwy, New Orleans, LA 70121, The Lauren Rogers Museum of Art in Laurel, MS or any other charity or organization of your choice.

To sign the online guest book, visit www.memorychapellaurel.com.

Cemetery Details

Lake Park Cemetery

1303 Old Bay Springs Rd
Laurel, MS 39440

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 25. 10:00 AM (CT)

First Trinity Presbyterian Church
500 N 5th Avenue
Laurel, MS 39440

Service

MAR 25. 11:00 AM (CT)

First Trinity Presbyterian Church
500 N 5th Avenue
Laurel, MS 39440

Tribute Wall

MG

“ Mae Graves lit a candle in memory of James Wray Bush



Mae E Graves - July 20, 2023 at 04:01 PM

AS

“ On behalf of the Gaddis Family, I am sending my dearest sympathy. Praying for the peace and comfort of Jesus. I know there is a party going on in heaven with Bob Gaddis and James Wray Bush! May God Bless each of you.

Amy Gaddis Singletary - April 10, 2023 at 04:04 PM

BM

“ Dear Pearson’s and extended family, my sincere condolences with the loss of Big Daddy. It is evident how much love, life, joy, and memories you shared together. May his celebration of life continue always and know that I am holding you all close at heart.

Beth McInerney - March 28, 2023 at 04:08 PM

JM

“ Prayers for your family Jim Mullican

Jim Mullican - March 24, 2023 at 10:20 AM

RW

“ To say his life made an impact would be an understatement. I was fortunate enough to spend a few days in the duck blind with him at Mr. T.A.'s camp. I'm a better person for having known Mr. James Wray. I know his passing will leave a massive void because the impact he made while on earth was so big. My thoughts and prayers with the family in the days ahead as they celebrate the life that was so well lived.

Raymond Walters - March 23, 2023 at 12:14 PM

FC

“ James Wray was a special man! We made fond memories with he and Shirley at Heritage RV Resort as they were our “back door” neighbors. James Wray never cooked a thing we didn't like and boat rides on “Big Daddy” were fun! May God bless his family during these days.

Ralph and Fay Campbell

Fay C. Campbell - March 23, 2023 at 12:06 PM

SL

“ Will never forget the kindness and generosity James Wray and Shirley showed us while we were in Laurel.

Sid Leak - March 23, 2023 at 11:08 AM

RS

“ Robert Smith purchased the Simply Elegant Spat hiphyllum for the family of James Wray Bush.



Robert Smith - March 22, 2023 at 01:00 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of James Wray Bush.*



March 21, 2023 at 05:35 PM