



Gene Bailey

February 14, 1933 - September 8, 2022

CAMP CREEK - Gene Bailey, age 89, went to heaven on September 8, 2022. He was the son of the late Forrest and Ruth Bailey, the grandson of the late Gilbert and Stella Bailey, and brother to the late Ron Bailey (wife Nancy Bailey) and Anne Bailey O'quinn (late husband, Chester O'quinn). He was a Christian who loved his family, his God, and his church, Melrose Community Church.

Gene married Elizabeth Brock Bailey while the two were still attending Princeton High School.

Their 49 years of marriage blessed them with four children, Steve Bailey (married to the late Ruth Bailey), Sonya Shrewsberry (married to Stephen Shrewsberry), Sabrina Mick, and the late Sara Stevens. In addition to his three living children, Gene loved his son-in-law, Dave Stevens (married to Tammy Stevens), as his own. The Gene Bailey family continues to grow through 17 grandchildren and 27 great-grandchildren.

Gene lived a life devoted to the good of his family, students and friends, in whom he instilled a love of God, country, education, travel, nature, and service. He was deeply proud of his Bailey family history, dating back to the 18th century, and his ancestors who were among the earliest settlers to the Mercer County area.

Gene exemplified a remarkable career in public service. He graduated from Princeton High School in 1951, after a stellar football career as an All-State lineman. In 1957, he graduated from Concord College with degrees in education and biology.

Throughout the 1950s and 60s, Gene helped manage Christmas tree farms for local physician and conservationist, Dr. Dan Hale. In the early 1970's, Gene began teaching a new program entitled Ornamental Horticulture at the Mercer County Tech Ed. Center. From that program he moved to Oakvale School where he taught social studies, WV history, and civics. Gene continued to teach until his retirement in 1991.

In addition to his full-time careers, Gene was elected to the Princeton City Council in 1978, where he served as a member and as Mayor of Princeton. His dedicated service there helped secure funding for Princeton Community Hospital.

In 1982, Gene was elected to the WV House of Delegates where he served for 8 years. Gene co-wrote legislation to improve the education system, tirelessly advocating for teachers and students. His work helped initiate the Faculty Senate and School Improvement Councils.

From July, 1994 until June, 2022, Gene served the citizens of Mercer County on the Mercer County Board of Education. During his 28 years of service, many improvements were made to the schools.

Also, during this time, Gene moved from Princeton to his land in Camp Creek, WV, to operate his own Christmas Tree Farm, Bluestone Nursery. As a tree grower, Gene served as president and newsletter editor for the WV Christmas Tree Growers' Association. One of his trees was selected as the WV Grand Champion Tree and displayed in the White House during Lyndon B. Johnson's

presidency. Gene's tree farm has continued to impact his family and the community, as he taught his children and grandchildren the Christmas Tree business, and provided trees for hundreds of families every year. Bluestone Nursery has become a yearly holiday tradition for many families, who return to the farm to find their own special Christmas tree, renew friendships and make memories.

Throughout his many endeavors Gene was always a planter of seeds. Whether in his home, his tree fields, the classroom, or the capital building, his vision was consistently looking to the good of the next generation. The deep roots of Gene Bailey's life continue to blossom into new growth through his family, his students, and his community.

The viewing and visitation for the Homecoming Celebration will be held on Thursday, September 15, 2022 at Bailey-Kirk Funeral Home in Princeton from 1:30 until 4:30 p.m.

It will be followed by the Homecoming Celebration of Gene's life at 4:30 p.m.

The burial will be held on Friday, September 16th at 10:00 a.m. at The Pisgah Community Church cemetery on the Pisgah Road, Princeton, WV.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to: Elizabeth Bailey & Sara Stevens Scholarship Fund, Concord University, P.O. Box 1000, Athens, WV 24712 or to Melrose Community Church, 228 Eads Mill Road, Princeton, WV 24739.

Arrangements by Bailey-Kirk Funeral Home in Princeton. Online condolences may be shared with the family at www.bailey-kirk.com.

Cemetery Details

Pisgah Community Church Cemetery

Pisgah Road
Princeton, WV 24740

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP **15**. 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM (ET)

Bailey-Kirk Funeral Home
1612 Honaker Avenue
Princeton, WV 24740
(304) 425-8176
info@bailey-kirk.com
<https://www.bailey-kirk.com>

Homecoming Celebration

SEP **15**. 4:30 PM (ET)

Bailey-Kirk Funeral Home
1612 Honaker Avenue
Princeton, WV 24740
(304) 425-8176
info@bailey-kirk.com
<https://www.bailey-kirk.com>

Tribute Wall



“ *Gene Bailey*

December 27, 2022 at 03:07 PM



“ *Best teacher I ever had. 78'-80',MCVo-Tech.*

Timothy H Taylor - September 20, 2022 at 01:40 AM



On behalf of the Bailey Family, thank you for sharing those kind words, Mr. Taylor.

Lauren Stevens - September 20, 2022 at 10:16 PM



“ *My wife Darla and I knew Gene well and will miss him . Our deepest condolences to the family*

Larry Montgomery - September 13, 2022 at 10:29 PM



On behalf of the Bailey Family, thank you for your kindness and sympathy.

Lauren Stevens - September 20, 2022 at 10:17 PM



“ *Arlene/Buddy Midkiff lit a candle in memory of Gene Bailey*



Arlene/Buddy Midkiff - September 13, 2022 at 09:02 PM

LS

On behalf of the Bailey Family, thank you for remembering Gene with us.

Lauren Stevens - September 20, 2022 at 10:18 PM

BM

“ I’ve known Gene Bailey for so long and all the good he brought to Princeton and Mercer County. I recently heard a story about his delivery of Christmas Trees to some local doctors, each had told him to pick out the one he thought they would like! They knew ‘he’d hand select just the right one!’

Brenda Miller-Mann - September 13, 2022 at 12:03 AM

LS

What a nice memory! On behalf of the Bailey Family, thank you for sharing those kind words.

Lauren Stevens - September 20, 2022 at 10:20 PM

DK

“ Such a sweet kind soul....my favorite teacher and our class sponsor for the OHS class of 1987. He was so good to all of us!!! Heaven surely gained a true angel ... prayers for all his family .

deanna kelly - September 13, 2022 at 12:01 AM

LS

Such gracious words, Deanna! On behalf of the Bailey Family, thank you for sharing and for your prayers.

Lauren Stevens - September 20, 2022 at 10:21 PM

KA

“ *Danny and I were blessed to work in Mercer County Schools during the time that Mr. Bailey served on the Board of Education . What a fine gentleman and what a legacy left for his family and friends!!!*

karenbuckner - September 12, 2022 at 11:54 PM

LS

On behalf of the Bailey Family, thank you for sharing your heart with us. Legacy is a great word to use when talking about Gene!

Lauren Stevens - September 20, 2022 at 10:23 PM

DC

“ *Gene was a man of intelligence, kindness, integrity and honor. He cared about his family, his community, his state and the world. It was my privilege to know him and his dear wife, Betty. Prayers and sympathy to the family.*

Deborah Clark - September 12, 2022 at 04:45 PM

LS

On behalf of the Bailey Family, thank you for honoring Gene's memory so well! Thank you for the prayers!

Lauren Stevens - September 20, 2022 at 10:25 PM

DW

“ *My mother's maiden name was Bailey I don't think this fine gentlemen is related to my family but I just wanted to tell you that had a very impressive life and obituary. All the ones are leaving us for a better home*

Dora Lafferty White - September 12, 2022 at 02:34 PM

KW

He was such a kind man. In years past, he was my basketball buddy at PSHS. He told me he was no longer able to drive at night to attend games. I wish I could have picked him up but had the same problem. I have missed seeing him around the area and talking to him. RIP dear friend.

Kaye Williams - September 13, 2022 at 06:45 AM

CM

Gene was the consummate educator and supporter of education. He supported Career Connections from its beginning in Mercer County Schools in the late nineties all through the rest of my career there in 2013. He asked appropriate questions, regarding the best means of providing every opportunity for students and, at the same time, protecting each student and the school system. He was always willing to come to any event that we requested. I loved talking with him and learning from him. Those of us who knew Gene Bailey are better people and educators. God bless his family.

Carol McClaugherty

Carol McClaugherty - September 13, 2022 at 10:31 AM

FJ

Our families were close in the early years as Gene's parents lived right down at the bottom of our driveway! My sister's and brother were in the 4-H, which Gene's mother was head of so we would meet at her house regularly. He was such an outstanding man! He and my dad, Dr. Fredric Goodall, were friends and had Christmas Trees in common. My dad also raised Christmas Trees, a hobby he loved. Gene will be missed by everyone who knew him. May God give you peace and comfort these days and the many days ahead. Prayers are going up for the family! God Bless you all!

Francine Goodall Jones - September 15, 2022 at 09:18 AM

LS

These comments and stories are so wonderful to read. On behalf of the Bailey Family, thank you for taking the time to share these wonderful stories and tributes. Thank you for the smiles and prayers. Blessings to you all!

Lauren Stevens - September 20, 2022 at 10:30 PM