



## Ursel (UJ) Keene

December 13, 1929 - December 25, 2021

PRINCETON – Ursel J. (UJ) Keene, 92, of Princeton, passed away from a brief illness on Saturday, December 25, 2021 surrounded by his family. Born December 13, 1929 in Richlands, VA, he was the son of the late Milton Thomas Keene and Goldie May Dye Keene.

UJ served in the Korean War, returned home to start a family and worked for Tinder White and Cole Motor Company in Bluefield, before opening his business, Keene Truck Parts in Bluewell. He was well known in the CB radio business for selling and repairing radios and went by the name “Ranger.”

UJ’s passion was working, rather it be at his business, or repairing anything that was broken. In the last few years, he enjoyed working at his sawmill, and couldn’t wait to get back to cutting down trees and sawing lumber. He will be greatly missed by his family and friends.

Survivors include his faithful and loving wife of 70 years, Elsie Lorine Bumgarner Keene; two daughters, Deborah Beatrice Keene Davis and spouse Gary of Hagerstown, MD and Ethel Carol Keene of Abingdon, VA; one son, Steven Douglas Keene and spouse Patricia of Galax, VA; two brothers, Thomas and Jack; one half-sister, Judy Jonelle Smith; two step-sisters, Della Burnette and Betty Schwartz; and three grandchildren, Staci Davis Wroblewski, Aaron Davis and Austin Keene; and four great grandchildren,

Camille and Khloe Wroblewski and Lincoln and Jackson Davis.

Funeral services will be conducted at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, December 30, 2021 at the Bailey-Kirk Funeral Home in Princeton with Pastor John Branham officiating. Private interment will follow at Greenhills Memory Gardens in Claypool Hill, Virginia.

The family will receive friends from 10:30 a.m. until service hour at the Bailey-Kirk Funeral Home in Princeton. Online condolences may be shared with the family at [www.bailey-kirk.com](http://www.bailey-kirk.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Greenhills Memory Gardens

11800 G C Peery Highway  
Cedar Bluff, VA 24609  
<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/funeral-homes/cedar-bluff-va/greenhills-memory-gardens-inc/9511>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**DEC 30.** 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

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

## Funeral Service

**DEC 30.** 11:30 AM (ET)

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

# Tribute Wall



“ *Ursel (UJ) Keene*

December 27, 2022 at 03:07 PM



“ *May the love of God surround you and your family during this difficult time,  
May you come to know that the love of God is with you always,*

*May your memories of Ursel J. Keene, give you peace, comfort and strength...*

*Rest now in the arms of our Lord your mission on earth is complete.  
I thank you for your service to our Country and my Freedom. You will not be forgotten.*

*My thoughts  
and prayers to the family of ....*

*US Veteran, Ursel J. Keene, is “A True American Hero” God Bless†*

*† Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13 †*

**Cheryl Skinner, Tri-state Military Museum** - December 29, 2021 at 06:46 AM

MC

“ I only knew Keene 4 years as we use to call him. I was working for Paul Cole and Keene was the General Parts Mgn. When he opened his new business he ask me if I would come and work for him . I declined out of loyalty to my current parts mgn, even though I could have used the extra dollar on the hour he offered. I also had hurt my back lifting some Mack truck springs earlier and I was afraid that I would hurt myself further. He understood, and we remained friends . I remember Keene as a driven type of man. He knew how to bark orders, but he was always fair with me. He also has a salesmanship quality about him also.. I was in my early 20s and he was around 45 at the time and he had the energy of a 20 year old. The one thing I learned from him , was how to Get things done. And I incorporated what he taught me some years later when I was a parts manager. I can understand where his sister Jolene is coming from when she described him as checking up on his family and careing about them. Keene was one of the early influences in my life and I always thought of him from time to time down through the years. I'm sure he will be missed by those who knew him and his family.

---

Mike Clemons - December 28, 2021 at 12:03 PM



“ Large Basket Garden was purchased for the family of Ursel (UJ) Keene.



---

December 28, 2021 at 11:40 AM

JO

“ Ursel was the eldest of 11 children and the "rock" of our family as the oldest sibling. He was a hard worker, and tried to look after all of us though how he kept up with 10 brothers and sisters, his own wife and children, job and then growing his own business of his own had to be exhausting, he never ever complained. Being the youngest he would come home to visit and check on Mom and my brothers and I at home, and he would pull up on his Harley motorcycle. Mom almost fainted when she saw him on it the first time, but he loved his bike! I was only in 5th grade at the time and I thought he was so COOL!



I also remember him showing Pat and Mike his CB radios and helping them getting them setup with their own CBs and turned into great enthusiasts up until the day the twins passed this year they both still were active with them! Mike even bought a Harley too. I rememb how he enjoyed cornbread in buttermilk as his special treat, which I couldn't understand how he could drink that stuff and teased him about it. He enjoyed working on cars and really anything he could take apart and put back together and make it work again.

He was always so proud of Debbie and Carol and called them his girls. We played together as we were close in age when we younger, and when we misbehaved, we all misbehaved, but good thing is that it didn't happen very often. He was very proud of both of them. Then his son came along, and he was the proudest papa you could ever have known.

Mom had a black and white photo of Ursel she always kept over the years. The photo she told us was of Ursel on his first paying job at the movie theater where he worked in the control room running the films and the picture was of Ursel loading a large roll of film in the projector. He was only in his teens at the time. His mother was so proud of him. She told us about his time served in Korea and how thankful she was when he finally came home as was the same with our other brothers who also served in the armed services-- Bill, Jack

*and Mike. I know they probably don't realize that everyday she would watch or listen to the news and pray she wouldn't hear that they were fatally injured and also praying she would catch a glimpse of them in the news broadcast.*

*So many memories, but so little time together as we grow older. Ursel was a very good man, husband to Elsie for 70 years and she to him, father to his children loving brother to his many brothers and sisters and will be missed by all. We must take comfort in knowing he is with our Lord and in the loving arms of our family who have gone before him. He will always remain in our hearts.*

*Rest now my brother. It is well earned. Jonelle*

---

**Jonelle** - December 27, 2021 at 07:19 PM

LM

“ *Uncle Ursel was a man of many talents. He was always a hard worker. He was a wealth of knowledge when it came to our family history. He will certainly be missed. I am thankful he accepted the ultimate gift of grace from our Lord and Savior so the family can have the peace of knowing his eternal destination. Our thoughts and prayers are with Aunt Elsie & the family.*

---

**Lisa McGlothlin** - December 27, 2021 at 06:40 PM

CK

*My prayers are with his family. May our Lord comfort them and keep them in His loving arms. Blessings and love to you Tom and Ann.  
Charlene Keen*

---

**Charkene Keen** - December 28, 2021 at 02:36 PM