



Joe Todd Taylor, Jr.

June 3, 1918 - October 13, 2012

Joe Todd Taylor, Jr., 94, passed away peacefully on October 13, 2012. Joe was born on June 3, 1918, in Statesville, where he grew up.

Joe's wife Wilburn, born as Wilburn Trexler, grew up in Salisbury. Joe met Wilburn at a cookout in 1935 and always referred to the occasion as "probably the greatest day of my life." They married in 1942 and celebrated their 70th Anniversary on September 19.

Joe entered the Navy after high school in Statesville for a four-year stint including time on the battleship USS Wyoming. Joe re-enlisted during World War II and served again from 1942 to 1945 as a chief petty officer radioman in a naval transport squadron stationed on the Atlantic coast. After the war, Joe continued to be active in the Naval Reserve and did not receive his final military discharge until 1966. In 1967, Joe was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation by the US Navy for his outstanding contributions to naval recruiting in the community of Salisbury.

After the war, Joe pursued a career in retail that would include 40 years with the Belk organization in Virginia, Ohio and North Carolina, and bring him to Salisbury in 1964 as Vice-President and General Manager of Belk Harry Company. Through his 21 year management of Belk-Harry, then the largest department store in town, it came to be said that, "There was a time when Joe Taylor was downtown Salisbury." In recognition of his distinguished service for the Belk organization and Salisbury, the Salisbury-Rowan Merchants Association gave him its Lifetime Achievement Award.

Joe served as president of the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association Foundation. During his career, Joe chaired or served as president of many other organizations including the Salisbury Symphony, Rotary and Kiwanis Club. Joe also has served from time to time as both a Deacon and Elder of the First Presbyterian Church in Salisbury. He was one of the earliest Eagle Scouts in NC and continued to be reelected and remained involved in meaningful ways as time went on.

Joe was commended for his years of unselfish extraordinary volunteer service to the United Negro College Fund Campaign of Livingstone College. In 1976 Livingstone College conferred upon Joe an honorary Doctor of Laws degree. Joe was an avid baseball fan. He was a dedicated supporter and regular attendee of Rowan American Legion Baseball. Joe was also recently honored for having been the first President of the Babe Ruth League in Ashland, Kentucky, where his family resided for 9 years while Joe managed his first department store in Ironton, Ohio.

Joe continued his community service after retirement, buying the old Wiley School and having it certified as a North Carolina historic structure to enable it to be converted in 1990 into 66 apartments for the elderly. The Taylors also bought a VFW post building on Brenner Avenue and donated it to Salisbury Academy for a classroom building in 1994.

After retirement in 1983, Joe became able to regularly play golf for the first time in his life, and once shot a round of 8 under his age of 82 at Salisbury Country Club.

The Taylors have two sons, three grandchildren and three great-grand children.

Their son Joe III lives in semi-retirement in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. Joe III lost his wife Susan Penny Taylor after 40 years of marriage in 2010 and has recently become engaged to Katherine McCormick of Ponte Vedra Beach. His daughter, Jennifer Taylor Kennedy and her Husband Dr. Robert Kennedy of Satellite Beach, Florida, have given Joe and Wilburn three great-grandchildren: Brooke (5), Preston (3) and Sloane (1). Jennifer's brother

Steven Penny Taylor lives in Jacksonville, Florida.

The Taylor's son Robert, who lived in Peachtree City, died at the age of 57.

Robert is survived by his wife Bonnie Taylor and by Joe and Wilburn's grandson Chad Robert Taylor, who lives in Newnan, Georgia.

A Funeral Service will take place at the First Presbyterian Church of Salisbury on Friday, October 19, at 1:00 P.M. Dr. Jim Duncan and Dr. Randy Kirby will officiate. The family will receive friends immediately following the service at Lewis Hall. Following the reception, there will be a military burial at 3:30 at Rowan Memorial Park Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to First Presbyterian Church, 308 West Fisher Street, Salisbury, NC 28144.

Tribute Wall



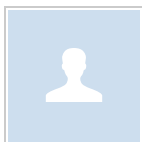
“ Sorry to hear about Mr. Taylor's passing. Worked with him for many years at Belk's in Salisbury. Your family is in my thoughts & prayers.##imported-begin##Martha Nell Brown##imported-end##

October 16, 2012 at 06:25 PM



“ Mr. Taylor was a very sweet man. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.##imported-begin##Betsy & Barry Rains##imported-end##

October 16, 2012 at 03:21 PM



“ Joe,
I am sorry for your loss. Your family is in my thoughts and prayers.

Yvonne##imported-begin##Yvonne Pompi##imported-end##

October 16, 2012 at 03:11 PM