



Jerome V. Watkins

November 2, 1922 - February 25, 2024

To join the livestream broadcast of Jerome's funeral service, please select the link below. The livestream will begin at 9:55 A.M. Friday, March 1, 2024. The service will be archived for 90 days for later viewing.

<https://view.oneroomstreaming.com/index.php?data=MTcwODk5NDgwNzI5NzU5NiZvbmVyb29tLWFkbWluJmNvcHlfbGluaw==>

Jerome V. "Wildcat" Watkins, age 101 years, a resident of rural Goreville, Illinois, passed away Sunday morning, February 25, 2024, at 2:20 A.M. at Heartland Regional Medical Center in Marion, Illinois.

Jerome was born November 2, 1922 at the family home near Karnak (Pulaski County) Illinois. He was the son of Johnson Thomas Watkins and Alvia Iowa (Samples) Watkins.

On May 17, 1947, Jerome was united in marriage to Vivian L. Astin at the First Baptist Church in Mounds, Illinois. Together, Jerome and Vivian enjoyed over 76 years of marriage.

In addition to his beloved wife, Jerome is survived by: his children – Terry L. (Barbara) Watkins of Goreville, Neal E. (Carol) Watkins of Vienna, Melinda "Mindy" Watkins (David) Hammond of Goreville, John P. "J.P." Watkins of Vienna, and Alan R. (Regina) Watkins of Johnston City; 12 grandchildren, 25

great grandchildren, and 10 great-great grandchildren.

In addition to his parents, Jerome was preceded in death by; an infant daughter – Velma Louise Watkins, a daughter-in-law – Anneice Watkins; a sister – Juanita P. Watkins McCready; and a brother – Hi Willard Watkins.

Jerome was a graduate of Karnak High School. He served in the United States Navy during World War II from March 1943 until his honorable discharge on March 8, 1946. During his military service, Jerome was a member of the Navy Seabees.

Following his discharge, Jerome was employed by the Singer Sewing Machine Company in Cincinnati, Ohio. Following the family's return to Southern Illinois, Jerome began working in the operations department at Electric Energy, Inc. (E.E.I.) at Joppa. He later transferred to the Southern Illinois Power Co-op power plant, located at the Lake of Egypt. He retired from S.I.P.C. as a shift foreman.

Jerome was a faithful Christian. He and Vivian worshipped together at the Goreville First Baptist Church, where he had served as a deacon for over 50 years. Jerome was also a member of the Disaster Relief Team sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention.

Jerome was an avid outdoorsman. He enjoyed hunting and fishing. Jerome is fondly remembered for his love of golf. For many years, Jerome was a familiar figure on local golf courses. He achieved every golfer's dream by making not one, but two holes-in-one. One hole-in-one was at the Lake of Egypt Golf Course and the other was at the former Gambit Golf Course in Vienna. To celebrate his 100th Birthday in 2022, Jerome's sons took him golfing at the Lake of Egypt course.

A funeral service honoring the life of Jerome V. Watkins will be conducted Friday morning, March 1, 2024, at 10 A.M. at the First Baptist Church, 608 West Main Street, Goreville, Illinois. Dr. Stephen Seaford will officiate.

Burial will be in the Cypress Cemetery. A flag presentation ceremony will be accorded by the U.S. Navy burial honors detail.

Visitation will be held Thursday, February 29, 2024, from 5 P.M. – 8 P.M. at the First Baptist Church in Goreville. An additional time of visitation will be held Friday morning, March 1, 2024, from 9 A.M. until the service hour at 10 A.M. at the church.

Memorials may be made to the American Diabetes Association, P.O. Box 7023, Merrifield, Virginia 22116-7023 or online at www.diabetes.org

Cemetery Details

Cypress Cemetery

5847 State Route 37 South
Cypress, IL

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 29. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church
608 West Main Street
Goreville, IL

Visitation

MAR 1. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

First Baptist Church
608 West Main Street
Goreville, IL

Service

MAR 1. 10:00 AM (CT)

First Baptist Church
608 West Main Street
Goreville, IL

Tribute Wall



“ *Bailey Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Jerome V. Watkins*



Bailey Funeral Home - March 01, 2024 at 09:28 AM

BV

“ *Alan and family, Sharon and I are keeping you in our prayers. God Bless, Bob Vandever*



Bob Vandever - March 02, 2024 at 06:37 PM

DS

“ *I have not seen Jerome & Vivian in years but the memories of them and their family will always be with me. As a kid, my family lived down the road from them on Route 37 for several years. They were the best neighbors and Mindy was a good friend that I spent many hours with. So very sorry for your loss, Watkins tribe!*

Debbie Jones Shreffler - March 01, 2024 at 04:14 PM

DS

I'm Debbie Jones Shreffler, daughter of Bob and Kathleen.

Debbie Jones Shreffler - March 01, 2024 at 04:15 PM

JB

“ Neal and Carol sorry for your loss. My thoughts and prayers will be with your family.

Joy Bundren - February 29, 2024 at 11:40 PM

BB

“ So sorry for your loss. Our prayers are with the family.



Bob & Sherry Belcher - February 29, 2024 at 06:55 PM

DD

“ Derrick and Nancy Durham purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Jerome V. Watkins.



Derrick and Nancy Durham - February 29, 2024 at 04:45 PM

DD

“ Derrick and Nancy Durham planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jerome V. Watkins.

Derrick and Nancy Durham - February 29, 2024 at 04:45 PM

MS

“ Mike & Nancy Solomon lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins



Mike & Nancy Solomon - February 29, 2024 at 06:45 AM

MI

Our prayers are with the families at this time. Special prayer for our grandson Cody and Hayley for the loss of your loved one.

Mike - February 29, 2024 at 06:48 AM

JW

“ We extend our deepest condolences to the family of Jerome. He was a gentleman and lived a long, good life. He will be missed.
Judge James R. and Deborah Williamson

Judge James R. and Debbie Williamson - February 28, 2024 at 06:43 PM

PM

“ Wildcat was always happy and loved by all. Prayers for Alan and all the family.

Pam Martin - February 28, 2024 at 10:38 AM

DF

“ Dorothy Astin and Family purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Jerome V. Watkins.



Dorothy Astin and Family - February 27, 2024 at 10:22 PM

JR

“ *Judy & Andrew Rodgers lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins*



Judy & Andrew Rodgers - February 27, 2024 at 08:23 PM

JF

“ *Jeff and Regina Paddick & family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Jerome V. Watkins.*



Jeff and Regina Paddick & family - February 27, 2024 at 10:03 AM

TC

“ *Always happy and admired by everyone. Known for playing fast, hitting ball straight, and striking the golf ball as soon as his foot hit the ground. I remember him telling a story about stopping his pull cart on the course about halfway through his round to discover a possum was enjoying the ride inside his bag. He was such a nice guy and role model for everyone. He will be remembered.*

Thomas Cole - February 26, 2024 at 10:33 PM

PW

Glenn and I want to express our sympathy and prayers to Vivian, Terry and the rest of the family.

Phyllis Webb - February 29, 2024 at 02:03 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Jerome V. Watkins.*



February 26, 2024 at 09:51 PM



“ *Nancy Breeden lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins*



Nancy Breeden - February 26, 2024 at 09:07 PM



Truly a wonderful human being. I have a tremendous amount of love and respect for him.

Dale Frey - February 29, 2024 at 10:13 AM



“ *My condolences to Vivian and family. I grew up with the Watkins family in Karnak, attending the same church and playing ball with Terry and Neal. My Dad and Wildcat worked together at the Joppa Power Plant.*

I'd stop and visit if I was in the Goreville area and he'd always show me some golf clubs he was making. He was quite a character with a smile always on his face.

Joey Holshouser - February 26, 2024 at 06:21 PM

JS

“ John Slack sent a virtual gift in memory of Jerome V. Watkins



John Slack - February 26, 2024 at 03:54 PM

KW

“ Kevin Williams purchased the Simply Elegant Sp athiphyllum for the family of Jerome V. Watkins.



Kevin Williams - February 26, 2024 at 03:40 PM

KW

“ Kevin Williams planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jerome V. Watkins.

Kevin Williams - February 26, 2024 at 03:40 PM

LM

“ Larry And Carolyn McGill lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins



Larry and Carolyn McGill - February 26, 2024 at 10:26 AM

MP

“ Matthew Prewitt lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins



Matthew Prewitt - February 26, 2024 at 08:11 AM

KB

“ Karen Brumley lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins



Karen Brumley - February 25, 2024 at 10:31 PM

JH

“ So sorry for your loss. Steve & Jeannie Housewright



Jeannie & Steve Housewright - February 25, 2024 at 07:43 PM

EH

“ Ellen And David Hill lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins



Ellen and David Hill - February 25, 2024 at 05:55 PM

CB

“ Please accept my heartfelt condolences. Jerome’s memory will live on in the hearts of those who knew him. -Connie Annable Bushor

Connie Annable Bushor - February 25, 2024 at 05:38 PM

LF

“ Linda & Bob Forbes lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins



Linda & Bob Forbes - February 25, 2024 at 05:08 PM

KA

“ My sincere sympathy & prayers to all Mr Watkins dear family.



Kathy(Black)Holt - February 25, 2024 at 04:38 PM

SI

“ So sorry to hear this. Prayers to your family.

Sandy Inman - February 25, 2024 at 03:56 PM

LM

“ Condolences to the family of Jerome Watkins. He was such an inspiration to all who knew him. He loved his family and loved the game of golf.

Larry Mizell - February 25, 2024 at 03:12 PM

EM

“ Edwin And Mylia lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins



Edwin and Mylia - February 25, 2024 at 03:01 PM

LT

“ Lowell @Susie Trovillion lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins



Lowell @Susie Trovillion - February 25, 2024 at 02:36 PM

LK

“ Linda Koehler lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins



Linda Koehler - February 25, 2024 at 02:26 PM

AR

“ Ali And Jeff Robison lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins



Ali and Jeff Robison - February 25, 2024 at 02:19 PM

BW

“ *Bill And Barb Warmack lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins*



Bill and Barb Warmack - February 25, 2024 at 02:00 PM

EH

“ *Etnie Henshaw lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins*



Etnie Henshaw - February 25, 2024 at 11:00 AM

LM

“ *Larry And Carolyn McGill lit a candle in memory of Jerome V. Watkins*



Larry and Carolyn McGill - February 25, 2024 at 10:50 AM