

## Mr. Donald Willis Piatt

August 2, 1939 - November 21, 2020

Donald Willis Piatt, age 81, died suddenly on November 21, 2020. He was born on August 2, 1939 in Harrison County, Ohio, at the family farm home. He was the third of six children and grew up in rural Ohio. Two days past his eighteenth birthday he enlisted in the United States Army and spent the next twenty-nine years as an active duty soldier.

He was preceded in death by his parents Lester and Arzanna Piatt, a son Donald Wayne Piatt, brothers Emerson Piatt, Jimmy Piatt; sisters Ella Bethel and Marlene Sprowl and a great grand-son Quentin Fitzpatrick.

He is survived by his wife Carolyn, son Steven Piatt (Karen), daughters Melanie Piatt, Paula Teleky (Louis); step-daughters Julia Fitzpatrick, Diane Smith (Terry) and sister-in-law Jackie Crowe; brother Gary Piatt (Phyllis), sister Joann Piatt. He is also survived by 13 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren plus numerous nieces and nephews.

Upon joining the Army at the lowest rank, Don excelled in all of his assignments, gaining rank as soon as eligible and at 20 years had attained the highest rank for enlisted, Sergeant Major. He served stateside in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Fort Knox, Kentucky; Fort Benning, Georgia and Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana. He served overseas in Newfoundland, Canada, Vietnam, Korea and West Germany.

He was awarded the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, Joint

Service Commendation Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal and Legion of Merit.

Upon retirement he began his career in Real Estate as a Realtor and Broker. He moved to Alabama in 1987 and the last few years he owned Southern Homes Realty. The people he helped buy and sell homes became his family and he was Papaw, friend and comrade to numerous people.

He was a member of Gardendale-Mount Vernon United Methodist Church and a member Jefferson North Gideon Camp. He was devoted to his Gideon brothers and served in several capacities in that camp.

He loved the Lord, his family and his friends. He had a zest for life, loved a good joke, and was quick to play a practical joke and laughed when he was on the receiving end of a joke. He frequently said that he never met a stranger and never let the truth stand in the way of a good story.

He made many good memories and felt he was a blessed man. He leaves behind a legacy of love, generosity and laughter. He will be sorely missed but those who knew him know that he now dwells forever with the Lord.

Pallbearers are Steve Piatt, Terry Smith, Jarrod Smith, Shaun Cavender, Jonathan Franklin, Greg Crowe. Honorary pall bearers Gideons of Jefferson North Camp.

Pastor Micah Marcum will be officiating the service at Gardendale Heritage Funeral Home. Family will receive friends on Tuesday, November 24 from 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM at Gardendale Heritage Funeral Home. A Celebration of Life Service will be held on Wednesday, November 25 at 11:00 am from the Chapel at Gardendale Heritage Funeral Home. Burial will be at Oakwood Memorial Gardens Cemetery following the service.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

NOV **24**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Gardendale Heritage Funeral Home  
2214 Decatur Highway  
Gardendale, AL 35071  
(205) 631-8810  
gardendalefuneralhome2@gmail.com

## Funeral Service

NOV **25**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Gardendale Heritage Funeral Home  
2214 Decatur Highway  
Gardendale, AL 35071  
(205) 631-8810  
gardendalefuneralhome2@gmail.com

# Tribute Wall

SP

“ *Don Piatt*

*Don and I became lifelong friends in 2005 when I bought a house he listed. While signing the contract, we learned we had both lost a son, and I was born the same year as his son.*

*That created a bond, plus all the details of buying and selling a house. Don always went above and beyond to help anyone that needed his help. He was there after the sale to help. I've never met anyone that respected others as much as Don.*

*For the past several weeks, I worked with him painting a rental house. I realized that Don didn't just know people's names, he knew hearts, he knew their story, and he cared deeply. The list of people he knew and cared about was long. He made people feel special and favored because he truly considered them a blessing in his life. He was genuine. His heart was that big. God blessed me with the opportunity during this time to know the depth of Don's story, to see that Sergeant Major Don Piatt, a tremendous blessing to so many, chose to live life as a Christian everyday, and now a prime example of a life well lived. I love him dearly.*

*He was most thankful and devoted to Carolyn. It was heartwarming when he talked about their life together. Don is a big miss. My deepest sympathy and heart felt prayers for Carolyn and the family.*

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**Sondra Pair** - December 02, 2020 at 07:14 AM

TB

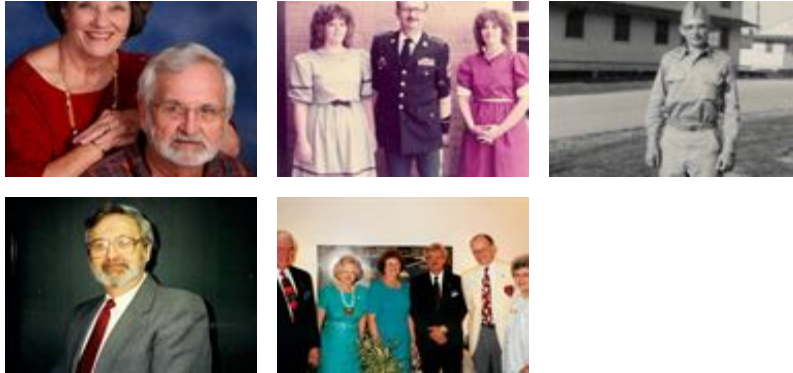
“ *I hate to see you go, Don, but the reunions you must be experiencing! God bless your family and your community who will be poorer in your absence, but thank you for your many years of great friendship and service.*

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**Tim Bagwell** - November 24, 2020 at 03:25 PM



“ 36 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



**Gardendale Heritage Funeral Home** - November 24, 2020 at 01:32 PM



“ ~Mika & Kandy Marcum, Jen Marcum, and Diane Thomas purchased the *Crystal Cross Bouquet* for the family of Mr. Donald Willis Piatt.



**~Mika & Kandy Marcum, Jen Marcum, and Diane Thomas** -  
November 24, 2020 at 09:44 AM



“ We always loved to see Don coming in Shaw Building Supply. He was one of the kindest men I've known, and it was always a pleasure to be in his company. He will be greatly missed.

**Tracy McAnnally** - November 24, 2020 at 09:37 AM

JM

“ *Mr. Don was a true friend, awesome Christian, and an amazing man. He was always so happy, and what a funny fellow. So much fun and laughter, and full of knowledge. He lived to help others, never stopping. My deepest condolences and prayers to Ms Carolyn and the family. He will be missed so very much. I feel blessed to have known him.*  
*God Bless,*  
*Jen*

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**J Marcum** - November 24, 2020 at 09:28 AM

RM

“ *I met Don through his work with the Gideons and found him to be a delightful person and a faithful servant of God. I am shocked to hear of his sudden passing but he is with the One he served. God Bless his memory and Gob Bless his family.*

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**Ron McKeever** - November 24, 2020 at 08:39 AM

LP

“ *Paula,*  
*I am so sorry to hear about your Father. I will keep you and your family in my prayers during this difficult time.*  
*Lois Post*

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**Lois Post** - November 24, 2020 at 08:14 AM

PT

*Thank you Lois!*

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**paula piatt teleky** - November 25, 2020 at 09:40 PM

MP

“ My uncle Don was one of many fun filled uncles I grew up with, just made me feel that I was his favorite nephew, I was blessed with him in my life. Thanks for the laughs and the hugs. GOD can now enjoy you one on one. Shalom to you, thanks for your service. Love Mark Piatt



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**Mark Piatt** - November 23, 2020 at 11:39 PM

LM

“ Our family is sending prayers to Don’s family. Don was such a special man to us. He helped us find our first house 🏠 in 1995 when we moved to Fultondale then helped us sell that one and buy our current one in Gardendale. Such a wonderful man am we will miss him so much. RIP Fred, as he told our daughter to call him 😊

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**Laura Morris** - November 23, 2020 at 09:17 PM

LH

“ Mr. Don came into my families life many many years ago. He held my oldest daughter from the time she was an infant until he just couldn't any longer. He always had a smile on his face and gave the best warm hugs. We met him through my Dad (Gary Cherry) at Cherokee Surveyors. He would often times just come in and talk with my Dad for hours. They became the best of friends. He prayed over my Mother alongside my Dad many times before she passed of cancer and then was a big comfort when my Dad passed away. He was such a blessing and so precious. I'm sure he is laughing with my Dad and Harry Crane now!! Prayers to the family for peace and comfort.



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**Lori Cherry Hardin** - November 23, 2020 at 06:59 PM

SW

“ *Paula and family,*

*So sorry for your loss. My prayers are with you during this difficult time.*

*May you keep his memories in your heart. Your Friend, Sue Watkins*

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**Sue Watkins** - November 23, 2020 at 02:02 PM

PT

*Thank you Sue*

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**paula piatt teleky** - November 25, 2020 at 09:42 PM