



## Ardean Wigley

July 13, 1932 - August 3, 2025

Ardean Wigley, lovingly known as Papa Dean, was born on July 13, 1932, to Emmitt and Dora Wigley. He was the baby boy of twelve children and the only one with just a single name—Granny Wigley said she was tired of picking middle names by the time he came along.

Papa Dean proudly served our country in the Korean War and had a deep love for the red, white, and blue. He was proud to be an American, and he wore that pride in everything he did.

In 1957, he married the love of his life, Virginia Lassetter. They had a simple, sweet agreement: they said “I love you” on their wedding day, and if anything ever changed, they’d let the other one know. It never did.

Together, they raised two sons, Tim and Greg. When Greg married Sharon, she wasn’t just a daughter-in-law—Papa Dean loved her like a daughter from the very beginning. Their journey as a family was filled with fun and adventure—road trips out West, visits to the beach and the mountains, and even a trip to Disney World the very first year it opened.

Later, my brother Caleb and I joined the family, and Papa Dean took his role as grandfather very seriously—especially when it came to spoiling us.

Whether it was treats from the store, surprise puppies from Trade Day, or a quick trip to McDonald’s when Caleb didn’t want what was on the table, he always found a way to make us feel special. He loved to say we were his favorite boy and girl in the world.

Papa Dean had a whole list of one-liners we’ll never forget. If you asked him

how old he was, he'd grin and say, "I'm 39." When life handed him something tough—or funny—you'd likely hear him say, "It is what it is." And just when you were feeling proud of yourself, he might lean over and ask with a smirk, "You ever gonna amount to anything?" He made us laugh every single time. He also had some legendary quirks and titles that we'll never forget. At the campgrounds, he was known as the ladder golf champion—he took the title seriously and celebrated every win. And if you were ever looking for him, chances are he had his trusty electric razor in hand, giving his face another once-over, sometimes multiple times a day. It became like a fidget spinner for him—comforting, routine, and oh-so-Papa Dean.

When Mawmaw Virginia went to Heaven—on their 59th wedding anniversary—Papa Dean's heart broke, but his faith never wavered. Even as dementia crept in, it never took away his love for the Lord. One of our favorite memories is a simple prayer he prayed not long ago: "Thank you, Lord... that's it."

Sometimes the most powerful prayers are the shortest ones.

Later in life, God brought Ms. Kathy Gunter into his world. She has been a true blessing to our family, and we're so thankful for the love and care she gave Papa Dean in his final years. Ms. Kathy has become family with all of us as she played such an important part in Papa Dean's life story.

At 93 years young, Papa Dean entered Heaven on August 3, 2025—and in God's beautiful timing, that just so happened to be Mawmaw Virginia's birthday. What a birthday gift she must have received. And as for Papa Dean's final word on this side of Heaven? In true Papa Dean fashion, it was simple and perfect: "Yep."

We are forever grateful for the gift of Papa Dean's life. It was a life filled with laughter, stories, songs, and deep, lasting love. He was truly one of a kind, and we will carry his memory, his joy, his one-liners, and his legacy with us always.

Funeral services will be held on Tuesday, August 5, 2025 at 4PM in Rainsville Funeral Home Chapel with Rev. Gary Haymon officiating. Burial will follow in

Kirk Memorial Gardens with Rainsville Funeral Home, Inc. directing, [www.rainsvillefuneralhome.com](http://www.rainsvillefuneralhome.com).

Family will received friends on Monday, August 4th from 5PM-8PM & Tuesday, August 5th from 2PM-4PM.

#### Survivors

2 Sons: Tim Wigley of Fyffe

Greg and Sharon Wigley of Rainsville

Brother-in-Law: Terry and Kathy Lassetter

Sister-in-Law: Janice Lassetter

2 Grandchildren: Whitney Wigley

Caleb Wigley

Caregiver & Special Friend: Kathy Gunter

A Host of Nieces, Nephews, and Family Members

#### Preceded in Death

Wife of 59 Years: Virginia Wigley

Parents: Emmitt & Dora Wigley

Siblings: Rev. J.D. Wigley, Rev. Calvin Wigley, Robbie Wigley, Dilmus Wigley, Clayton Wigley, Stella Hartline, Allie Haymon, Beatrice Woods, Clara Helton, Ernest Wigley, & Lorine Woods.

A special thanks to his caregivers from As Close As Family.

# Cemetery Details

## Kirk Memorial Gardens

114 Kirk Road  
Rainsville, AL 35986

# Previous Events

## Visitation

AUG 4. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (cst)

Rainsville Funeral Home  
498 Mccurdy Ave N  
Rainsville, AL 35986  
(256) 638-2122  
<https://www.rainsvillefuneralhome.com>

## Visitation

AUG 5. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (cst)

Rainsville Funeral Home  
498 Mccurdy Ave N  
Rainsville, AL 35986  
(256) 638-2122  
<https://www.rainsvillefuneralhome.com>

## Funeral Service

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AUG 5. 4:00 PM (cst)

Rainsville Funeral Home  
498 Mccurdy Ave N  
Rainsville, AL 35986  
(256) 638-2122  
<https://www.rainsvillefuneralhome.com>