



## Cecil Reed

April 21, 1940 - March 14, 2026

Cecil Ray Reed, age 85, of Fort Payne, Alabama, passed away at his home on March 14th surrounded by the love and legacy of a life devoted to family, community, and public service. Born on April 21, 1940, in Centre, Alabama, Cecil was the son of Robert L. Reed and Ethel Reed.

A 1958 graduate of Cedar Bluff High School, Cecil often shared stories from his youth growing up in Cherokee County—working in the cotton fields and remembering how inexpensive a bottle of Coca-Cola was in those days. His father served as the Chief of Police and Municipal Judge in Centre, and it was through watching him that Cecil developed a deep respect for law enforcement and a lifelong desire to serve others.

In 1963, Cecil married the love of his life, Linda Curtis Reed. Together they built a home centered on faith, family, and community, sharing many happy years until Linda's passing in April 2014.

Cecil began his long and distinguished career in public service in 1961 when he joined the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office as a patrol officer under Sheriff Buck Edwards. He briefly joined the Fort Payne Police Department in 1962 before returning to the Sheriff's Office where he served until being elected as the DeKalb County Circuit Clerk, a role he held from 1971 to 1977. Following his service as Circuit Clerk, he returned to the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office

where he served as Chief Deputy under Sheriff Harold Richards for 16 years.

In 1994, Cecil was elected Sheriff of DeKalb County and was sworn into office in January 1995. During his tenure, he was known as a fair and dedicated leader who sought justice while treating every person—regardless of circumstance—with dignity and respect. One colleague summarized his character best: “His word is his bond. If he told you something, you could take it to the bank.”

Sheriff Reed played a significant role in many notable criminal cases during his career and was especially committed to protecting the youth of DeKalb County. He served as chief of the DeKalb County Drug Task Force and was instrumental in launching the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program in local schools, positively impacting thousands of students. He also oversaw the implementation of School Resource Officers in all DeKalb County schools, helping ensure safer learning environments for generations of children.

One of his many notable accomplishments was overseeing the construction of the new DeKalb County Jail, which opened in 2006 ahead of schedule and under budget. In recognition of his leadership and dedication, the facility was later named the Cecil Reed Detention Center in 2021.

Cecil retired from law enforcement in January 2007 after 41 years of service. In honor of his distinguished career, he was named a Supernumerary Sheriff by Governor Bob Riley.

Throughout his life, Cecil received numerous awards and recognitions, including the V. I. Prewett Lifetime Achievement Award in 2006, Law Enforcement Official of the Year in 1998, the D.A.R.E. Friend of Youth Award (1998–1999), and appreciation awards from the DeKalb County Board of

Education, the Optimist Club for his work with youth, and the Fort Payne Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 37 to name a few.

He was also active in many organizations throughout his life including the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge No. 37, the Fort Payne Masonic Lodge No. 437, and the Rotary Club. Cecil was a lifetime member of the Alabama Sheriffs' Boys and Girls Ranches Builders Club, the Alabama Sheriffs' Association, and the National Sheriffs' Association. He was an active member of Allen Memorial Baptist Church.

Despite his many professional accomplishments, Cecil was first and foremost a family man. After retirement he devoted his time to the people he loved most—his wife, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. His face would light up whenever they were near. He rarely missed a ball game, school function, or community event where his family was involved. Some of his happiest moments were spent sitting on the floor playing with the grandkids, rocking babies, or giving rides on his lawn mower. He also loved being outdoors, whether mowing the yard, swimming, or tending to his flowers.

One of Cecil's favorite traditions each year was the World's Longest Yard Sale. As August approached, he eagerly prepared by firing up his grill and selling hot dogs to the hundreds, maybe thousands of visitors passing through Fort Payne. More than anything, he loved talking with people and hearing their stories—because Cecil truly never met a stranger.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Robert L. and Ethel Reed; his beloved wife, Linda Curtis Reed; and his siblings Mildred Reed, Eugene Reed, Eloise Flemming, Fred Reed, and Peggy Green.

He is survived by his son, Curt Reed and wife Mary, and their children Brittany

(Joey) Holcomb and Spencer (Kelsie) Reed; his daughter, Crystal Davis and husband David, and their children Alli (Cole) Justice and Jake (Jessica) Davis. Cecil was also the proud great-grandfather of Graham, Reed, and Parker Holcomb; Jasper, Jessi, Jayda, and Linna Cate Justice; and Harrison Reed. He is also survived by a host of nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Cecil Reed—lovingly known to most as Sheriff, Paw Paw, or Uncle Cecil—will be remembered as a devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and public servant who gave his life to protecting and serving his community. He never met a stranger, loved people deeply, and left a legacy of integrity, compassion, and service that will live on in the hearts of all who knew him.

Funeral services will be 2 p.m. Wednesday, March 18th at Wilson Funeral Home in Fort Payne with burial following with law enforcement honors in Glenwood Cemetery. The family will receive friends Tuesday evening from 3 p.m. until 8 p.m. and on Wednesday from 10 a.m. until the 2 p.m. hour of service.

Wilson Funeral Home and Crematory of Fort Payne is in charge of arrangements.

# Cemetery Details

## Glenwood Cemetery

1002 Grand Avenue SW  
Fort Payne, AL 35967

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR 17. 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Wilson Funeral Home  
3801 Gault Ave. N  
Fort Payne, AL 35967

## Funeral Service

MAR 18. 2:00 PM (CT)

Wilson Funeral Home  
3801 Gault Ave. N  
Fort Payne, AL 35967

# Tribute Wall

DT

“ *Mr. Cecil Reed served humanity as a bright light filled with honor, honesty and integrity. I will never forget his beautiful smile, his kind heart and his wisdom. Thank you, rest in peace, well done my friend.*

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**Donna Taheri** - March 17 at 07:17 PM

MG

“ *Misty G. lit a candle in memory of Cecil Reed*



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**Misty G.** - March 17 at 04:06 PM

CF

“ *Christy Smith & Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Cecil Reed.*



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**Christy Smith & Family** - March 17 at 10:22 AM

CF

“ *Christy Smith & Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Cecil Reed.*

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**Christy Smith & Family** - March 17 at 10:22 AM

LW

“ LEIGH ANN WRIGHT lit a candle in memory of Cecil Reed



LEIGH ANN WRIGHT - March 17 at 10:15 AM

AB

“ So very sorry for your loss.... He will be missed by many.

Annette Baugh - March 17 at 09:53 AM

NL

“ Nina Lovel purchased the Sweet Tranquility Basket for the family of Cecil Reed.



Nina Lovel - March 16 at 06:50 PM

SH

“ I have known Cecil since I was a child. His brother, Gene married my first cousin, Virginia Lankford and Cecil became a dear part of our extended family. He was a good, caring person. He loved Linda and his children. He will be greatly missed.

Sarah Tate Haase - March 16 at 05:08 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Cecil Reed.*



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March 16 at 04:00 PM



“ *For AJ: your aides & Janie purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Cecil Reed.*



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**For AJ: your aides & Janie** - March 16 at 03:22 PM



“ *Mr. And Mrs. Jack D. Smith purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Cecil Reed.*



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**Mr. And Mrs. Jack D. Smith** - March 16 at 01:51 PM



“ *Mr. And Mrs. Jack D. Smith planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Cecil Reed.*

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**Mr. And Mrs. Jack D. Smith** - March 16 at 01:51 PM

PG

“ Pam Gilbert lit a candle in memory of Cecil Reed



Pam Gilbert - March 16 at 01:06 AM

MF

“ What a wonderful guy he was. We are praying for his family! God bless you, all Brent and Marsha Fuller & family.



Marsha Fuller - March 15 at 07:21 PM

MS

Sorry for your loss. You are in our prayers.

Martha stout - March 15 at 10:15 PM

JS

“ Cecil was a great man him and Linda did my taxes for over 30 years and while interacting with them we developed a good friendship he was funny,smart and full of personality my sympathy to all of the family I know he will be missed 🙏

Jerry Sharp - March 15 at 06:26 PM



“ Sorry for your loss. I have always thought the world of him. Cecil and my dad were great friends. He will be missed. Keeping you all in my prayers

Camille Lindsey - March 15 at 04:42 PM

BR

“ Cecil was a long time friend of me and my husband!  
He was a very loved man and will be missed!  
FLY HIGH WITH THE ANGELS 🙏🙏🙏  
CECIL



Billy and Kathy Rigstad - March 15 at 03:48 PM

CL

“ Cheryl Little lit a candle in memory of Cecil Reed



Cheryl Little - March 15 at 03:08 PM



“ Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Cecil Reed.



March 15 at 02:10 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Cecil Reed.

March 15 at 02:10 PM