



Pierce Rayvon Pettis

March 10, 1918 - April 25, 2013

Pierce Rayvon Pettis, Jr., 95, passed away April 25, 2013, at Monarch Estates in Auburn, Alabama. Military funeral services will be held on Tuesday, April 30, 11:30 a.m., at First United Methodist Church, Fort Payne, AL, with visitation in Cobble Hall one hour prior to the service. Burial will follow in Glenwood Cemetery. Officiating will be FUMC Pastor, Ricky Smith, and Chaplain (Major) Roger McCay. Rayvon was born on his father's birthday, March 10, 1918, in Evergreen, Alabama. The family later moved to Guntersville, Alabama, where he graduated high school. Rayvon entered Alabama Polytechnic Institute, now Auburn University, in 1936, and graduated with a degree in Agricultural Science in 1939. He was a member of Alpha Gamma Rho social fraternity. After college Rayvon was employed as Assistant County Agent and 4-H Agent in Jackson County, Alabama. It is there he met and married Laura Elizabeth Smith of Scottsboro, Alabama, on December 23, 1940. Shortly after the beginning of World War II, they transferred to Bay Minette, Alabama, where Rayvon enlisted in the United States Navy and was accepted into Navy Midshipman School in Chicago, Illinois. Their first child, Nancy Virginia, was born in Mobile in 1942. In August of 1943, Rayvon left Laura and Nancy Virginia with his parents in Fayette, Alabama, and reported for duty. Later he was given command of Torpedo Patrol Boat USS 45, primarily involved in rescue duty off the French colony of New Caledonia in the South Pacific. Rayvon spent nearly two years in the South Pacific and was later reassigned to Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He was honorably discharged five months later

and began work with The Chilean Nitrate Sales Corporation in Montgomery, Alabama, and resided in Andalusia, Alabama. Their second child, Laura Sophia, was born in 1946 in Fayette, Alabama. In 1949, Rayvon and Laura bought the Western Auto Store in Fort Payne, Alabama. (They later purchased two other Western Auto stores—one in Collinsville, AL, and another in south Florida.) In 1954, their third and last child, Pierce Rayvon Pettis, III, was born. Rayvon and Laura were members of First United Methodist Church; Rayvon was a founding member of Fort Payne Junior Chamber of Commerce, president of the Rotary Club, served on the local Mental Health Board and also the local school board. He also became a licensed pilot and co-owner of a private plane—a Piper Cherokee. Rayvon also enjoyed boating on the Tennessee River, and he was one of the first from Fort Payne to water ski. In 1974, he and Laura built the Cherokee Apartments in Fort Payne. Nearing retirement, they sold the Western Auto in 1978 and sold the apartments in 1983. In 2005, they moved to Auburn, Alabama, to be closer to their two daughters. This is where they have resided for the past eight years. Rayvon is survived by his wife, the love of his life and best friend of 72 ½ years, Laura Elizabeth Smith Pettis; his three children and their spouses—Nancy Pettis Gardner (Dan), Sophia Pettis McCay (James), and Pierce Pettis, III (Michele); two brothers, David C. Pettis (Margaret), and R. Leon Pettis (Linda); nine grandchildren; and thirteen great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his parents, Pierce Rayvon Pettis, Sr. and Nettie Virginia Cravey Pettis; and his brother and sister-in-law, Aubrey M. and Florence Pettis. In Lieu of flowers, the family respectfully requests that donations be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, (P.O. Box 758517, Topeka, KS 66675, or www.woundedwarriorproject.org, or 855-448-3997); or a charity of your choosing. Wilson Funeral Home, Fort Payne, AL, is in charge of arrangements.

Tribute Wall



“ *Pierce Rayvon Pettis*

January 12, 2023 at 10:45 AM



“ *Tom and I send our deep and sincere sympathy. He was greatly loved. We wish we could be there. Thank you so much for sending the obituary. We love you all and are praying for you and all of your family.*

Tom and Karen Healey - April 30, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ *Dear Pierce and family, Just wanted you to know that you are in my thoughts and prayers. I have many fond memories living next door to you and your family in Fort Payne. Your dad was a Class Act!*

Steve Ables - April 30, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ *So sorry about Rayvon. Our prayers are with you at this time. Jim and Ann Houston Raymond J. Groat*

Jim & Ann Houston - April 30, 2013 at 12:00 AM



“ *Deepest sympathies for your loss; prayers are with you all as you struggle through this difficult time.*

Dexter Smith - April 29, 2013 at 12:00 AM

LS

“ *Our prayers are with you and your family. God has a way of fill the void you feel with great memories. I am glad I had the opportunity to know him. We love you Larry & Nancy*

Larry and Nancy Stowe - April 28, 2013 at 12:00 AM

KM

“ *Sophia and family, I am so sorry to hear about your Dad. I know that he is in a better place and at peace. Your family will be in my prayers.*

Kitty Echols Marriott - April 26, 2013 at 12:00 AM