



Mr. Gilbert T. "Sonny" Powers, Jr.

November 29, 1933 - August 7, 2020

Gilbert Tennent "Sonny" Powers, Jr.

Columbia- Gilbert Tennent "Sonny" Powers, Jr. died early Friday morning at Prisma Health Baptist Hospital after a brief battle with COVID-19. Son of the late Gilbert Tennent Powers, Sr. and Sarah Odom Powers, Sonny was born November 29, 1933 in Columbia, SC. He is survived by his loving wife, Elizabeth Verner Powers, four children, Gilbert Tennent Powers III (Christine), Elizabeth Weston Powers Harmon (Mark), William Duffie Verner Powers, Sarah Preston Powers Marzagao (Marwan), four grandchildren, Sarah Tennent "Sally" Marzagao, Mary Duffie Marzagao, William Powers Marzagao, Elizabeth Verner "Evie" Harmon, and scores of extended family and dear friends.

After graduating from Dreher High School in 1951, Sonny attended Clemson Agricultural and Mechanical College (Clemson University), during which time he served in the United States Army. While stationed throughout various locations in Germany from 1956-1957, Sonny served as a shortwave radio operator in the border patrol of the Third Battalion, 14th Armored Cavalry Regiment. He returned to his native Columbia after his time at Clemson and in the Army and remained a bachelor until meeting Elizabeth Weston Verner. After two years of courtship, Sonny and Elizabeth (whom he affectionately called "Fox" for her slyness) were married at St. John's Episcopal Church in Congaree, SC on May 7, 1966. Several years later he established G.T. Powers, Jr. and Associates and was active in the SC Association of Life Underwriters. He was an insurance and estate planning veteran and remained active in his business until his death.

Beyond his family and successful career, Sonny's passion was serving others. He was an avid and dedicated member of North Lake Sertoma Club, holding several positions of leadership throughout more than 40 years of membership. His pride and joy within the Sertoma organization was Camp Sertoma, where he served as a board member for four decades. As co-chair of numerous significant fundraising efforts to improve the Camp Sertoma experience, Sonny spearheaded Project 76, through which Camp Sertoma was founded; Project Splash, which funded the construction of an Olympic size swimming pool

with special needs capabilities; and Project Launch A Shooting Star, which established the Camp Sertoma Endowment Fund.

A member of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Sonny was a man of strong faith and instilled its importance upon his children. He enjoyed being social and was a member of the Cotillion Club, The Quadrille, St. Andrews Society of Columbia, IPTAY, Old Men's Lunch Club, the Thursday Morning Prayer Group and Forest Lake Club where his enthusiasm for tennis (as well as his peculiar service toss, short fuse and keen eyesight) was legendary on the courts. He enjoyed going out to eat and even more so when joined by friends. Another of Sonny's great passions was following all types of sports, none more so than his beloved Clemson Tigers football team.

Sonny liked his food hot and his beverages cold, especially Old Fashioneds where he bypassed the muddling fruit and opted instead for using orange juice and cherry juice. He loved beach music and "60 Minute Man" always called him to the dance floor to shag with Fox. The beach brought great joy to Sonny and family vacations each summer were most memorable, especially his deep affection for Mrs. Ruth Smalls who cooked for the family and in her later years would come to just visit. Extended family and friends were always welcome but had better not be late for dinner.

The Reverend Canon Patricia C. Malanuk will officiate a service for the immediate family. Sonny's ashes will rest at St. John's Episcopal Church in Congaree, SC where he and his bride married 54 years ago. He made it known that upon his death, instead of tears, a party would be thrown to celebrate his life. This celebration will be announced when family and friends are able to come together without the threat of COVID-19. Shives Funeral Home, Trenholm Road Chapel, is assisting the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Camp Sertoma of SC, c/o Dale Treash, PO Box 1808, Anderson, SC 29622 or a charity of one's choice. Condolences for the family may be offered online at ShivesFuneralHome.com or by correspondence, 913 Rickenbaker Road, Columbia, SC 29205.

Comments



“ Dear Sarah,

I'm so sorry for your loss. Sending lots of love to you, Duffie and your mom. You're in my thoughts.

Sincerely,
Mackie

Mackie Clonts - August 12, 2020 at 07:59 PM



“ From Holly Lumpkin purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Mr. Gilbert T. "Sonny" Powers, Jr..



From Holly Lumpkin - August 10, 2020 at 07:28 PM



“ I will always remember our group of Dads with girl children who formed the Indian Princes. This is the female version of Indian Chiefs for boys. We had many wonderful times together with our excited young girls, and Sonny always greeted me with “How How Chief Roy”. We will all miss Sonny very much.

Roy McCrorey

Roy McCrorey - August 10, 2020 at 09:12 AM



“ To Duffie and Family:

I am so sorry for your loss. My hope is you will be strengthened by your faith and sustained by good memories.

Based on his obituary, it looks like a GO TIGERS! is appropriate.

Stuart Mauney
Greenville SC

Stuart Mauney - August 10, 2020 at 08:46 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Gilbert T. "Sonny" Powers, Jr..



August 09, 2020 at 07:50 PM



“ Lot's of memories but special ones over the years on the tennis court. He was a great and lively friend.

Charlie Carpenter - August 09, 2020 at 09:07 AM



“ Thoughts & Prayers was purchased for the family of Mr. Gilbert T. "Sonny" Powers, Jr..



August 08, 2020 at 11:20 PM



“ Sonny Powers, - Clemson through and through - a gentleman and a scholar. He loved his family, he loved life, and he loved his friends. He will be missed. Sandy and Johnny Yates

Sandy Yates - August 08, 2020 at 10:13 AM



“ So sorry to learn of Sonny's death. He was a fine man and a long-time friend. May he rest in peace and may the good Lord comfort his family at this sad time. Bud and Ruthie Tibshrary

Bud Tibshrary - August 07, 2020 at 01:15 PM



“ "Sonny was, indeed, a fine man and I know will be missed by man. Dale Boozer

Dale Boozer - August 08, 2020 at 12:03 AM



“ A great friend and business associate for more than 50 years. Thanks for the memories and fun times we shared. To Elizabeth and the children, may God wrap you in His loving arms and grant you peace, comfort and mercy as you mourn this great loss.

Scott Brawley

W. Scott Brawley - August 08, 2020 at 10:16 AM



“ Thoughts and prayers.

Chuck Plowden - August 09, 2020 at 07:31 AM



“ To his family,

"Deep peace of Christ, the light of the world, to you."

Susannah and Ed Farley

Susannah H Farley - August 09, 2020 at 12:52 PM



“ To the Powers Family

My thoughts and prayers are with you doing this time. I worked with Sonny Sunshine and he was a joy to work with. He will be missed. May God comfort each of you and give you peace in the days ahead.

Arlene

Arlene - August 10, 2020 at 10:28 AM



“ I meant Sonny many years ago when I worked as the asst. manager/funeral director for Shives Funeral Home. He later booked our band Endless Summer for 2 private events. One was the wedding of Rev. Patsy Moore to Dr. Malanuk. I remember he did shag quite alot at both events those nights. Sorry to read about him leaving this world.

John - August 12, 2020 at 10:09 AM



“ My condolences to the family. The last time I saw Sonny was at a joyous occasion, during the 50th anniversary celebration of Camp Sertoma. I'll always remember how happy he was at that event. I definitely want to attend the party in celebration of his life.

John Kelly - August 14, 2020 at 01:43 PM



“ I'm sorry to hear of your loss. I met Mr. Powers through NAIFA meetings & he was very knowledgeable and a great representative of our industry. Our thoughts & prayers are with the family. Glenn Suggs

