



## Mr Willis Dabbs Bethea, Jr.

November 24, 1953 - April 13, 2019

Willis Dabbs Bethea, Jr., 65, beloved husband and father, passed away Saturday, April 13, 2019. Born in Lancaster, SC on November 24, 1953, he was the son of the late Willis Dabbs Bethea, Sr., and Sally Galloway Bethea. Willis grew up on his family farm, which is where he developed his strong work ethic. Throughout his life there were very few things he couldn't do or fix. The farm was also the idyllic setting of numerous campouts with friends, as well as great fishing, hunting, barn, horse and cattle escapades that continue to be a source of amusement to this day.

Willis attended the University of South Carolina where he was a photographer for The Gamecock and Vice-President of PHI KAPPA PSI fraternity. He started his career in insurance software with Seibels Bruce then went to PMSC/CSC where he worked for over 30 years. His career gave him the opportunity to travel the world to destinations such as Australia, New Zealand, and Bali, to name a few. Before his health declined, he was a project manager at Blue Cross/Blue Shield where he had the privilege of working with many wonderful and supportive people.

More than anything, Willis enjoyed watching Will and Tanner in all their many sporting events, antique shopping with Tangie, discussing plants and flowers with his sister Liz, and walking in his backyard every day.

Willis is survived by his devoted wife, Tangela Shull Bethea; sons, Willis Dabbs Bethea III, and Tanner Ramsey Bethea. He is also survived by his sisters, Laine Bethea Wiedemann (Eddie), Elizabeth Bethea Fuller (Dave), Amanda Bethea Keaveny, and Lisa Bethea Pettit (Bryan); parents-in-law, Robert and Kay Shull, brother-in-law, Tim Shull (Debra), as well as numerous nieces, nephews, and three great-nieces and two great-nephews.

He was predeceased by his niece, Mary Olivia Pettit, and his nephew, Michael Ross Wiedemann. The family would like to express their heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to Betty Addison, Jane Biddix, Ashley and Mac Love, family, friends and neighbors for all their love and support during Willis' valiant battle with cancer.

The service for Mr. Bethea will be held at 2:00, Tuesday, April 16th, at Shandon United Methodist Church, with Reverend Smoke Kanipe officiating. The family will receive friends Monday evening from 5:00 until 8:00 at the home of Ashley and Mac Love, 2148 Shady Lane, Columbia, SC. Burial will be private.

Shives Funeral Home, Trenholm Road Chapel, is assisting the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Shandon United Methodist Church's YOUTH MISSION PROJECT, 3407 Devine Street, Columbia, SC 29205.

# Events

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**APR** **Visitation** 05:00PM - 08:00PM

**15**

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Love Residence

2148 Shady Lane, Columbia, SC, US, 29206

**APR** **Celebration of Life** 02:00PM

**16**

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Shandon United Methodist Church

3407 Devine St, Columbia, SC, US, 29205

# Comments

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“ The Bethea Family,

Shocked is my only response to this sad news of Willis's passing.

I met Willis in 1978 when I decided to forego my Gamecock scholarship due to a serious football injury. He was a friend of a close friend, and advocated for me to get a room at Phi Kappa Psi's frat house (dorm) even though I wasn't a brother (at the time, but became one a year later). Over the next year I got to know Willis on a personal basis and visited with him at his apartment and while visiting, became enamored with his house plant collection of over 30 plants. Within that year I began my own plant ensemble with some of Willis's precious seedlings. The umbrella plant seedlings were of special interest to me and their legacy still lives on here at my home 40 +years later.

My fraternity experience was full of fun and eventful memories all due to Willis's encouragement and in hindsight, contributed to my foundation as a leader and success both personally and professionally.

Brother Willis, you are and will be missed...in Respect and love....Stu Armstrong

**Stu Armstrong** - April 26 at 12:17 PM

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“ Tina Stewart Gulley lit a candle in memory of Mr Willis Dabbs Bethea, Jr.



**tina stewart gulley** - April 20 at 03:29 PM

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“ We are so sorry for your loss. We met Willis so long ago when he was the best landlord a college student could ever ask for. We know he was a wonderful man, husband, father and friend and will be missed so much. You are all in our prayers for peace and comfort!

Love,  
Beth, George, Hadley and Doak Fisher

**Beth Fisher** - April 16 at 10:27 AM



“ I’m so sorry to hear about Willis. I worked with him for many years at PMSC/CSC. He was very kind, and loved talking about the farm. Your family is in my prayers.  
Deborah Weaver

**Deborah Weaver** - April 15 at 07:40 PM

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“ I spent some of my most treasured moments with Willis and the Bethea family. Rest in Peace my friend. Bill Fortune

**Bill Fortune** - April 15 at 03:55 PM

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“ DEAR TANGELA. I AM SO SORRY TO HEAR OF YOUR LOSS OF WILLIS. I HAD HEARD THAT HE WAS FIGHTING AND SAD TO HEAR HIS LOSS. MY THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS ARE WITH YOU AND THE BOYS AND ALL THE FAMILY. LOVE YOU.. BOB PRICE

**ROBERT PRICE** - April 15 at 01:56 PM

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“ I am so very sad and sorry to hear about Willis. He was a wonderful member of our Innovation Group team in North America for a number of years. He was skilled professional and highly respected by his colleagues and customers alike. His integrity, calm demeanor and quiet sense of humor made it an absolute pleasure to work with him. Few people make a lasting impression and Willis was most certainly one of them.

My sincere condolences to the whole Bethea family. My thoughts and prayers are with you during these very sorrowful times.

Euan King.

**Euan King** - April 15 at 09:09 AM

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“ I worked with Willis for many years at CSC. He was my source of calm through some trying times and I was his source of laughter. Willis was insanity proud of his boys and loved Tangie dearly. It was a privilege to call him my friend. He was a good man to the core of his soul.

Courtenay Ellis - April 15 at 08:39 AM



“ \*insanely

Courtenay Ellis - April 15 at 08:41 AM

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“ I had the pleasure of working with Willis at Innovation Group several years ago. Besides his skill as a Project Manager, he was a kind and gentle soul; always calm under pressure. A true southern gentleman who was thoughtful and considerate to everyone. My heart is breaking for his family; the people who will always be the center of his world. I am blessed to have known him, he will be missed. May God bless you all with strength, courage and grace as you face the days ahead.

Caroline Berman - April 14 at 11:30 AM



“ I am humbled by this woman's words about Willis, Jr. I shared it on Facebook.

Becky Mitchell - April 14 at 07:17 PM

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“ What a wonderful man Willis was. I loved working with him. One of the kindest and most considerate people you could know. My heart is breaking. He will be missed.

Mary Bumpas - April 14 at 10:22 AM

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“ May God's grace be upon you and your family.  
Mrs. Sumter  
LW Conder Elementary

Tyreea Tillery Sumter - April 14 at 08:20 AM

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“ Willis left this world much, much, much better than he found it.....

He had the chance to tell his sweet Tangie and both fine sons - Will and Tanner - that he was ready for Heaven and knew that was his final home. What a blessing for any man/husband/dad to be able to do. Something he wanted them and all of us to look forward to.....until we meet again.

He fought the good fight.....he finished the race!

Blessed to have been able to call him my dear friend in life and in Christ.

## God Bless, Mac Love

**Mac Love** - April 13 at 07:24 PM



“ Willis and I became instant friends in junior high. Willis, his mom, dad and 4 sisters treated me like I was family.

For several years and most every week, Willis and I camped, hunted, and performed farm chores. Willis could repair or build anything he set his mind to. During those years, I learned invaluable lessons from him and his family. He was a solid friend to so many and fought the most courageous battle with cancer.

Rest in peace Friend.

Rick Hammond

**Rick Hammond** - April 15 at 07:34 PM