



James Delbert Nunley Sr.

January 12, 1922 - February 18, 2013

On February 18, 2013, James Delbert Nunley Sr., age 91, succumbed to a short illness and joined God's bowling team. Delbert was born in a log cabin near Center Ridge, AR on January 12, 1922 and was the oldest child of Earl and Effie Nunley. A son of farmers, Delbert worked the farm as soon as he was old enough to guide a horse drawn plow. His formal education ended in the 5th grade, but his desire to learn never diminished. At the age of 17, in 1939, he entered the Conservation Corp in Arkansas where after working an eight hour shift clearing brush and timber, he attended two hours of optional vocational training courses each day. He was discharged from the CC in 1941.

On September 15, 1941, Delbert married Agnes Mae Ward of Formosa, AR. They were married for 60 years, four months and two days until her death on January 17, 2002. Their first child, Betty Gay, died at age three in 1945.

In April 1942, Delbert answered Uncle Sam's, "I want you in Europe," entreaty and joined the United States Army, where he served with the 8th Division in Germany until the defeat of Nazism. The 8th Division returned to the states to await transport to the Western Pacific for the invasion of Japan when the war ended. Delbert was Honorably Discharged in December of 1946 as a Technician 4th Grade.

In 1948, Delbert and Agnes moved to Napa where they raised four sons. They quickly became members of Calvary Baptist Church. Throughout his 60-year membership, Delbert held various positions at the church, including Sunday School Teacher, Money Counter, Trustee and Deacon. Due to declining membership in 2011, he convinced the remaining handful of members to deed the property to the current New Wine Church. New Wine Church is Napa's first Hispanic Southern Baptist Convention Congregation and currently has over 100 members.

"Del" worked as a Lead Maintenance worker at Basalt Rock Company in Napa, San Rafael and Novato for 22 years, until the company downsized after being sold to Dillingham. Del was never out of work for long. He worked various maintenance jobs

around the Bay Area until 1967, when he began his career as a Shop 56 Pipefitter at Mare Island Naval Shipyard. At Mare Island "Del" became known as "Pappy". He retired as a Foreman in March 1984.

Del was known for his unwavering positive attitude. He was never short on smiles, laughter and stories. One favorite story he loved to share was when he and his wife Agnes went to cash his paycheck at Pueblo Market. Normally Delbert would give the check to Agnes who would endorse it and then use it to buy groceries. But one day, Delbert went along with his wife to the market. The clerk looked at the properly-endorsed check and touted, "I'm sorry, Sir, but this isn't your signature." Unsure how to handle the situation, Delbert turned to Agnes, who peered at the clerk and sternly barked, "Cash the check!" The clerk did not hesitate.

Del was an avid bowler who often caused frustration in competitors younger than him. He participated in Napa leagues for over 35 years and continued to regularly bowl with his sons and grandsons up through age 91. He maintained a 160 average and is credited with a 718 series and a 289 single game score during league play.

He was a member of Sons in Retirement (SIRS) Branches 80 and 105. He served one term each as Big Sir and Little Sir. Soon after joining, he became the Branch Chaplain and served at the position until his death.

On February 15, 2009, Del married Nancy June Epperson/Crawford, who was a true blessing to him.

He was predeceased by First Wife, Agnes Mae; Daughter, Betty Gay; Father, Earl Henry; Mother, Effie May; Brother, Marvin; Sisters, Ima Dene ("Smokey") Christner and Caroline Graham.

He is survived by his wife, Nancy June; sister, Opal Flowers; brother, Dwight (Pauline); sons, Jim (Denise), Glenn (Christine), Brian (Nancy) and Bruce (Patty); stepdaughters, Terry Scheumann (Jim) and Robin Jordan; grandchildren; Stacy, James, Justin, Trevor, Glenn, Joshua, Kim, Brianna, Michelle, Garrett, Kyle and Robin. He is also survived by eight great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

The Family would like to thank Kaiser Hospice for their professional and compassionate care and request that in lieu of flowers, a donation be made to Kaiser Hospice in Delbert's honor.

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **25.** 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (PT)

Claffey and Rota Funeral Home
1975 Main Street
Napa, CA 94559
(707) 224-5210
services@claffeyandrota.com
<http://www.claffeyandrota.com>

Funeral Service

FEB **26.** 11:00 AM (PT)

New Wine Church
2645 Laurel Street
Napa, CA

Tribute Wall



“ *James Delbert Nunley Sr.*

September 29, 2022 at 04:54 PM



“ *James Delbert Nunley Sr.*

September 29, 2022 at 02:55 PM



“ *Nunley Family,*

We send our love and sympathy in the death of Uncle Delbert. He always had a humorous story, a big smile, and made sure everyone was having a fun time. When he came to AR for visits he always invited us to come to visit him in Napa, I regret that I never made it. Hoping that all the wonderful memories comfort you during your sorrow. Uncle Delbert will be greatly missed. Tom, Sonja and Gavin Drew (Grandson of Belle Ward-Honeycutt)

Tom Drew - February 26, 2013 at 06:16 PM



“ *Betty & I send our condolences to all the Nunley family. We will always have fond memories of Delbert & Agnes, especially those years at Calvary Baptist.. As his obituary stated he had an “unwavering positive attitude, never short on smiles, laughter & stories.” To coin the phrase Delbert was of the “Old School” fair, firm and likeable, he will be missed.*

Joe & Betty Neff

Joe & Betty Neff - February 25, 2013 at 12:46 AM

MA

“ So sorry to hear of Delbert's passing this past week. Our families have been connected since perhaps before Delbert was born. Delbert's Dad, Earl, and my Dad, Vernon Price were best friends most of their lives in Arkansas and then California. I have fond memories of visiting the Nunley's and their coming to Sunday dinners at our house. Agnes was a distant cousin of mine (Ward) also. Effie, Delbert's mother, I'm told was at our house when I was born (farmhouse in Morrilton, Arkansas). Delbert and Agnes were present at the Kaiser Hospital in Vallejo with my sister, Rama Price Walter and myself when our mother, Mackie Ward Price passed away.

Our connection with the Nunley family runs strong and long. I feel a great sorrow with Delbert's passing, it feels like the end of an era. He was such a strong ethical man, much like his father.

Our sincere condolences to Nancy, Dwight, and Opal and all the Nunley clan for their monumental loss.

Mary Ann Price Andrade and Aileen Price (R.F. Price)
mapandrade@msn.com

Mary Ann Andrade - February 23, 2013 at 06:38 PM

DN

“ Dwight, Pauline and Natalie Nunley purchased the Dreams From the Heart Bouquet for the family of James Delbert Nunley Sr..



Dwight, Pauline and Natalie Nunley - February 22, 2013 at 11:20 AM

CC

“ I am sorry to hear about the passing of Pappy. I worked with him for years on Mare Island. He was quite a character and a good leader. He will be missed by all.

Chip Carter

Chip Carter - February 20, 2013 at 11:27 PM

RF

“ *R.G., Marvanell Ward and Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of James Delbert Nunley Sr..*



R.G., Marvanell Ward and Family - February 20, 2013 at 06:37 PM

KI

“ *1 file added to the album Family*



Kim - February 20, 2013 at 11:16 AM

NN

He was proud of you and all his grandkids!

Nancy Nunley - February 20, 2013 at 12:05 PM

RO

Brian...I amso sorry for your loss...I know what he ment to you...Lynn and My prayers are with you and the family.

Ron - February 20, 2013 at 07:18 PM