



Orville Ray O'Neal

August 29, 1930 - March 23, 2020

Orville (Ray) O'Neal died on March 23, 2020 at his home in Raleigh, NC. Ray was born on August 29, 1930 in Morton, Texas. He was the son of Herbert Currie O'Neal and Willie Mae Cullins O'Neal. His mother died in 1936 and for the next five years Ray lived in numerous places with various loving relatives. By the time his father had remarried and resettled the family in Lubbock, Texas, Ray was 11 years old and had lived in fourteen different places in Texas in five different family arrangements. Fortunately, he lived the next 11 years in Lubbock, graduating high school there and graduating from Texas Tech with a degree in Electrical Engineering in August 1952. Attending college had kept him out of the military draft during the Korean War.

Ray went to work with Western Electric (AT&T) in Winston-Salem, NC, manufacturing electronic radar equipment for the military. Six months later he was sent to New Jersey for three months which stretched to two years designing the same type of hardware with the Bell Telephone Laboratories. This was the start of over forty years with the Bell System consisting of two levels of professional engineering and three levels of management in engineering and purchasing. He lived in five different locations in three states, but he always considered himself a Texan first. He finished his career with seven years at AT&T's Guilford Center in Greensboro.

In 1955 while visiting at the First Presbyterian Church in Winston-Salem, Ray met Geraldine (Jerry) Setzer who was also visiting there. They were married June 9, 1956 at Augsburg Lutheran Church in Winston-Salem. They became parents of two daughters, Lisa Jane and Amy Claire, in 1957 and 1959. Jerry and Ray led an active life with much traveling, church activities, bridge and cultural activities such as symphonies and operas. They survived five household moves.

In Greensboro, Ray was active in the First Lutheran Church as Sunday School teacher, library committee, program committee and usher; and in his neighborhood as clubhouse committee. Always ready to play Bridge or Poker, he also enjoyed gardening and loved the movie, Titanic. Ray always had a camera and took numerous photos which his family still appreciates. In 2010 he was awarded Caregiver of the Year for Greensboro for the care he gave his wife, Jerry while she progressed with Alzheimer's.

After a fall, he moved to Raleigh to be near his daughter and became a member of Good

Shepherd Lutheran Church. He embraced the theme each month at Memory Cafe, a monthly dinner and music gathering at GSLC. He continued to play Bridge and Poker at his senior living facility Atria Oakridge.

Ray was preceded in death by his parents and by his loving wife of over 52 years, Jerry. Ray O'Neal is survived by his two daughters; their husbands Rick Sears (Lisa) and Eric Barish (Amy); six grandchildren: Alexandra Sears, Nathaniel Barish, Rebecca Brown, Zachary Sears, Christopher Barish and Benjamin Barish; and two great-grandchildren: Virginia Barish and William Brown.

A family graveside service will be held at Oaklawn Memorial Gardens in Winston Salem. A memorial service will be held at a later date in Raleigh.

Cemetery

Oaklawn Memorial Gardens

3250 High Point Road

Winston-Salem, NC, 27107