



William Preston Keel, Jr.

May 19, 1931 - March 10, 2020

William Preston 'Pete' Keel, Jr., age 88, passed away on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, in Conyers, Georgia. He was born on May 19, 1931, on a tobacco farm in Bethel, North Carolina, to William and Bessie Keel, Sr. Pete proudly served in the United States Army during the Korean War, which fortuitously (given his distaste for tobacco) brought him to Atlanta. After his discharge, Pete found employment as a technician with Western Electric (AT&T)—an occupation he would happily and successfully maintain until his retirement 37 years later. Soon thereafter, Pete risked going on a blind date with a co-worker's sister. There, he met Barbara, who would become his true love, the jewel of his life, and cherished wife of 64 years. Pete and Barbara would later have two children—Monica and Derik—and enjoy the quintessential American lifestyle for decades. Pete devoted his life to serving his wife, his family, his church, and the broader community. He was an integral member of the Telephone Pioneers of America, which performed a variety of charitable projects. He served his community in many ways, including by working for the Rockdale County Board of Elections for over 15 years. Pete was also a longtime member (and deacon) of Philadelphia Baptist Church in Conyers until he and Barbara became members of Rockdale Baptist Church. Both churches entrusted him to count collections, a duty in which he took considerable pride. He actively participated in many other church activities, including being a member of the Partners Sunday School Class and Happy Hearts Senior Organization. Among other interests, Pete always relished his bi-annual

participation at AmericasMart in downtown Atlanta, where he met many travelers and made many friends over 25 years. Pete was also an avid gardener, known especially for his okra and tomatoes, which he liberally supplied to friends and family. As anyone who ever passed by his and Barbara's home on Klondike Road can attest, his devotion to his yard and its upkeep was keen, and second only to his devotion to his family. Indeed, it was his family that gave Pete his greatest sense of accomplishment. Known as "Hadaddy" to his six grandchildren, great-grandson and their friends; Pete was an inseparable participant in their lives and a powerful force in shaping their characters and values. Pete died as he lived—surrounded by his adoring family. He is survived by his loving wife, Barbara, his daughter, Monica Hendrix, and son and daughter-in-law, Derik and Catharine Keel; grandchildren, Christopher Hendrix, Daniel Hendrix, Luke Hendrix, Caitie and Mike Kennedy, Mikaila 'Gabbie' Keel, Brie Keel; great-grandson, Dylan Hendrix; brothers and sisters-in-law, Gene and Sara Keel, Jimmy and Linda Keel; sister-in-law, Pat Edwards; and several nieces and nephews. Funeral services will be held Saturday, March 14, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. at Rockdale Baptist Church, with Rev. Dr. Billy Moss officiating, Mr. Keel will lie in state from 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m., at the church; interment will follow at Green Meadow Memorial Gardens. The family will receive friends Friday, March 13, 2020 from 5:30 until 8:30 p.m. at the funeral home. Condolences may be submitted on-line at www.scotward.com. Scot Ward Funeral Services, 699 American Legion Rd., Conyers, GA, 770-483-7216. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in Pete's name to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Cemetery Details

Green Meadow Memorial Gardens

677 American Legion Rd.
Conyers, GA 30012

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 13. 5:30 PM - 8:30 PM (ET)

Scot Ward Funeral Services at Green Meadow Memorial Gardens
699 American Legion Road
Conyers, GA 30012

Service

MAR 14. 2:00 PM (ET)

Rockdale Baptist Church
1295 Smyrna Rd SW
Conyers, GA 30094

Tribute Wall

KH

“ *Kim Hicks lit a candle in memory of William Preston Keel, Jr.*



Kim Hicks - March 16, 2020 at 09:52 AM

KH

Pete and Barbara were Great Friends of my late Parents, John & Pat Hickey, our Families have known each other for over 40 years, my Husband Wayne Nicknamed Pete "The BBQ Man"! We enjoyed many BBQ Meals at Philadelphia Baptist Church and at Salem Campground. Wayne and I send our love and Prayers to the Keel Family, he was such a Sweetie! Guess him and Daddy just might be Cooking BBQ with each other now! 🙏🏻🙏🏻

Kim Hicks - March 16, 2020 at 09:59 AM

PP

“ *I will miss seeing him working in the yard as I leave my driveway. His friendly smile and wave brightened my day. A good neighbor*

Patricia Price - March 13, 2020 at 11:37 PM

DS

“ *Dianne Sullens lit a candle in memory of William Preston Keel, Jr.*



Dianne Sullens - March 13, 2020 at 09:06 PM

DS

Your wonderful presence will sign much longer than you probably would have ever imagined! Thanks for being such a ray of sunshine and hope with so little effort. We will take care of your sweetheart, Ms. Barbara.

Dianne Sullens - March 13, 2020 at 09:09 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of William Preston Keel, Jr..*



March 13, 2020 at 06:50 PM



“ *Love's Journey was purchased for the family of William Preston Keel, Jr..*



March 13, 2020 at 04:46 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Life Tributes*



Scot Ward Funeral Services - March 13, 2020 at 01:07 PM

AB

“ *Hadaddy always smiled and truly listened when you talked. Even though our paths crossed rarely through the years, he always had a reassuring presence and genuinely cared for other people. Over the last few days I've run into many others in the community who knew him but we didn't know until now that we both knew him. The sentiments we have shared are the same - the earthly world lost one of the great ones. Much love and prayers to the entire family during this difficult time.*

Amanda Baskett - March 13, 2020 at 12:53 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of William Preston Keel, Jr..*



March 13, 2020 at 12:46 PM



“ *55 files added to the album Life Tributes*



Scot Ward Funeral Services - March 13, 2020 at 11:52 AM



“ *Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of William Preston Keel, Jr..*



March 13, 2020 at 11:27 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of William Preston Keel, Jr..*



March 13, 2020 at 06:25 AM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of William Preston Keel, Jr..*



March 13, 2020 at 12:20 AM



“ *My condolences to all of Pete's family. He was a fine guy and will be missed. I met him in 1960 when I went to work for WECO and we stayed friends from then on. He was a great unselfish worker for the Telephone Pioneers and even ran a store for them in the cafeteria at the plant.*

George Banks - March 12, 2020 at 07:02 PM

DV

“ *Debra Keel Vincent lit a candle in memory of William Preston Keel, Jr.*



Debra Keel Vincent - March 12, 2020 at 12:21 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of William Preston Keel, Jr..*



March 12, 2020 at 11:27 AM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of William Preston Keel, Jr..*



March 12, 2020 at 10:01 AM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of William Preston Keel, Jr..*



March 12, 2020 at 08:11 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of *William Preston Keel, Jr.*



March 11, 2020 at 08:30 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms* was purchased for the family of *William Preston Keel, Jr.*



March 11, 2020 at 06:54 PM



“ *Pretty Please* was purchased for the family of *William Preston Keel, Jr.*



March 11, 2020 at 05:35 PM