



J.D. "Jake" Gaither

August 27, 1932 - September 21, 2024

J.D. Gaither passed away on September 21, 2024 at the age of 92. "Jake" was born at home on August 27, 1932 in Munford, Alabama, the tenth of eleven children born to Joe and Dora Gaither. Like many young teenagers who came of age in the 1940s, he wanted to serve his country and enlisted when he was only 14-years-old and served during both World War II and the Korean War. In 1952 he moved to Jacksonville Florida where he met Mary Rozelle Padgett, the love of his life. They eloped on August 19, 1955 and celebrated their 69th wedding anniversary earlier this year. Jake and Rozelle had three daughters: Dora Rebecca, Julie Rozelle, and Eva Marie; granddaughter, Julianna Marie.

Jake eventually settled into a career that lasted 40 plus years as a sheet metal mechanic with Local 85 in Atlanta, Georgia. Throughout his life, he remained a strong supporter of labor unions. Jake also had a lifelong passion for learning and broad interests that included anthropology, world cultures, languages, and exercise. He taught himself Spanish after being stationed in the Panama Canal, and at the age of 40, he taught himself to play tennis and eventually received a ranking by the United States Tennis Association. Jake

loved to joke
around, tease, and dance, and was known for giving nicknames to all those
he cared about. He
loved dogs and rescued many throughout the years to bring home to his girls.
After retirement he
and Rozelle returned to his home state of Alabama.

J.D. is survived by his wife Mary Rozelle Gaither; daughters Dora Rebecca
Gaither, Dr. Julie Rozelle Gaither, and Eva Marie Gaither Eff; granddaughter
Julianna Marie Ruben; sons-in-law Rakesh Sonker, Rick Eff, Flavio
DeCastilhos, and Max Coombes; sister-in-law Betty Lawson; and many nieces
and nephews. He is preceded in death by his parents and ten siblings: Ruth,
James, Henry, Lula, Joe, Grace, Lorene, Dan, Bill, Dorothy. J.D. passed away
at home on the last day of summer.

Memorial Services for J.D. will be announced once details are finalized.
Arrangements entrusted to Arab Heritage Memorial Chapel.

Tribute Wall



“ *Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of J.D. "Jake" Gaither.*



September 30, 2024 at 01:36 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



Arab Heritage Memorial Chapel - September 27, 2024 at 11:37 AM