



Joseph Alan Whitt

December 16, 1949 - November 25, 2020

Joseph Alan Whitt, 70, of Athens, Alabama passed away peacefully on November 25, 2020 at Athens-Limestone Hospital surrounded by his family. A true and loyal friend, a loving husband and a devoted father, Joe is survived by his wife Brenda Johnson Whitt, son Joseph Alan Whitt Jr., daughter Amanda Whitt Havely (Samuel), and son Martin Adrian Whitt, all of Athens. He is also survived by a brother Mark Hollis Whitt (Phyllis) of Athens, and a sister Bonnie Gail Whitt (Michael) of Huntsville.

Born December 16, 1949 in Athens to parents Floyd Jackson Whitt and Laura Weigart Whitt, Joe received his Bachelor's Degree from Athens State University and went on to successfully own and operate Whitt's Barbecue's founding location on Elm Street for over 50 years.

Joe was a master chef, an artist, and a bon vivant. Nothing pleased him more than seeing a customer's face light up with delight at the taste of his creations. He spent years perfecting the subtlest of details, and applied the same level of doting care to his interactions with people. He could talk to absolutely anybody.

He was a father-figure and mentor to generations of young employees, many of whom cite him as a pivotal, positive influence in their life. And he told unforgettable stories, with a tone that struck a rare balance between tenderness and mischief. His jokes were nothing short of legend.

Later in life, his garden was his pride and joy, bursting especially this past summer with tomatoes, cucumbers, curly-leaf mustard, and vine-ripened grapes.

He traveled the world and loved to fly. Inspired by the stories of his father, a veteran pilot in World War II, Joe built working model airplanes from scratch for many years. He once took a flight aboard a Zero-G aircraft with astronaut Buzz Aldrin, hitched a ride in the same type of bomber that his father once flew, and lived out a lifelong dream of skydiving. He explored the ruins of Macchu Picchu, stood in the shadow of Moai on Easter Island,

toasted the sunset floating down the River Danube, and often agreed with Mark Twain's sentiment that "you can go to Heaven if you want, I'd rather stay here in Bermuda."

Words cannot express how much Joe will be missed by those who loved him.

The Whitt family will hold a visitation for Joe at Limestone Chapel, Friday, November 27 from 5 to 7 pm; and a graveside service will follow at Athens City Cemetery, Saturday, November 28 at 11 am.

Comments



“ Joe and I were best friends in elementary and junior high. We were also roommates at the Univ of Alabama our Freshman year. I remember him falling out of a tree and breaking his arm; the first remote control airplane he built and staying over at his home. Like Joe, his parents were wonderful and treated me like Family. Brenda, my heart hurts for you. Joe will be sorely missed. I didn't know until today. John Robinson (Dickie).

JOHN R ROBINSON JR - November 30, 2020 at 07:08 PM



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Debbie Wise - November 30, 2020 at 09:29 AM



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Kind heart and smile love my first cousins.

Nancy Whitt -Jacobs - November 29, 2020 at 10:35 PM



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We are so sorry for your loss, Amanda and family. You all are in our hearts and minds. Sending you love during this difficult time. -Nick & Chris

Nick Tipton and Chris Good - November 29, 2020 at 07:31 PM



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Dear Joseph and family. I am so sorry to hear of your Daddy's passing. Though I never met him, I feel as though I had as you both trekked across the globe and I followed along online. I am grateful he was such a loving force in your life. Best, Jodi in Nashville

Jodi Hays - November 29, 2020 at 09:57 AM



“ We are keeping you in our hearts and minds with thoughts of love , strength, and peace. We are so sorry for your loss.

Quincy & Dustin Seitz - November 28, 2020 at 04:19 PM



“ I never liked baked turkey. It was too dry. One Thanksgiving in the late 60s or early 70s my mother asked Joe to barbecue a turkey. It was fabulous. My memory is that was the first turkey to be barbecued in the pit at Elm Street. I can remember many Wednesdays before Thanksgiving cars lined up forever with people picking up their barbecue turkeys. I have eaten Joe's Turkey every week for over 40 years. Maybe 20 tons? Will miss him!

John Plunk - November 27, 2020 at 04:37 PM



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you. We are so sorry for your loss.

Jerry & Sherry Proctor -Ronnie & Lisa Moore - November 27, 2020 at 04:13 PM



“ Words cannot adequately express or fill the gap created by your loss. You all are in our thoughts and prayers.

The Seard & Turnbull Family - November 26, 2020 at 06:25 PM



“ With love and respect - Whitts Murfreesboro

Tribute Store - November 26, 2020 at 12:18 PM



“ Reminding those whom you support that your thoughts are with them.

Ms. Johanna Lenski - January 10, 2020 at 09:52 PM