



John Bruce Gunnels

April 16, 2024

John Bruce Gunnels, 91, of Albany, GA passed away peacefully in Chattanooga, TN in the presence of family on April 16, 2024.

Bruce was beloved and respected by his family, friends, and business colleagues and often was described as a man of great integrity.

He was born in Albany to William Whitfield Gunnels, Sr. and Louise Hudson Gunnels. In his youth, he developed an impressive work ethic while working for his father at Gunnels Coal Company.

After graduating from Albany High School in 1950, Bruce attended Auburn University where he obtained a B.S. degree in the School of Business and became a lifelong War Eagle fan. During his college days, he married the love of his life, Katie Sue Jordan. The couple lived for a short time in Biloxi, MS while he attended Radio School. Soon after, the couple moved to Germany where he served his country during the Korean Conflict in the U.S. Air Force. Once back in Albany, Bruce earned a Real Estate brokers license and launched Gunnels Realty Company and enjoyed building residential homes throughout the northwest area of Albany.

He served as President of the Albany Real Estate Board and served as President of Home Builders Association of Albany as well as the Planning Commission. Impressively, he served on the Board of the Dougherty County Tax Assessors for 21 years. His extensive knowledge of real estate and real estate law lead him to teach classes at Darton College (now Albany State University) and Albany Technical College.

Faith was especially important to Bruce. He was a founding member of Central Baptist Church where he served as a Deacon. He later joined and served as a Deacon at Covenant Presbyterian Church. He also served his community as a Founding Father of the Halycon Club and a volunteer of Meals on Wheels.

In 1971, he won the Doublegate Country Club Golf Championship which was a surprise to no one. He loved the game of golf throughout his life and held a 0 to 2 handicap. He was a member of the Hole In One Club, making a hole in one on #16 on August 5, 1979, and on #6 on October 26, 1979.

Bruce held many titles in his life, but his most cherished role was that of DAD. A loving and supportive father of three, grandfather to eight, and great grandfather to fourteen. In addition to his children and grands, Bruce was also a compassionate lover of dogs. Any dog lucky enough to be his enjoyed a lot of affection and probably way too many table scraps.

Bruce is preceded in death by his daughter Kathy Gunnels Kale, his granddaughter Katie Kale, sister Jean Stimpson, brother Whit Gunnels, Jr., son-in-law Will Aultman, sister-in-law Clara Jordan Bennett, and nephew Whitfield Gunnels, III.

He is survived by his wife, Katie Gunnels of Chattanooga, TN, son Bruce Gunnels (Tina) of Opelika, AL; Drew Aultman of Chattanooga, TN; Grandchildren: Jack Kale (Sandra) of Gulf Breeze, FL; Jenna Burleson (Greg) Dallas, TX; John Gunnels (Autumn) Nashville, TN; Ashly Davis (Jordan) Valley, AL; Hilsman Knight (Alivia) Scottsdale, AZ; Jordan Knight (Kristen) Austin, TX; Andrew Aultman, Providence, RI. Great Grandchildren: Gabe Kale, Emma Kale, Julia Kale, Lucas Burleson, Parker Burleson, Lydia Gunnels, Whitt Gunnels, Dallas Davis, Presley Davis, Hudson Davis, Anson Knight, Holden Knight, Benjamin Knight, Joanna Knight. Nieces: Laura Smith, Julia Christian, and Denise Gunnels. Nephews: Jay Bennett, Jon Bennett, and Joe Bennett.

Services will be held on Saturday, April 20th at Covenant Presbyterian Church. Family Visitation at 10 a.m. with a service at 11 a.m. Interment to

follow at Crown Hill Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to St. Jude Children's Hospital, The Albany Humane Society, Covenant Presbyterian Church or charity of choice.

Cemetery Details

Crown Hill Cemetery

1907 Dawson Rd.
Albany, GA 31707

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 20. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Covenant Presbyterian Church
2216 W. Edgewater Dr.
Albany, GA 31707

Funeral Service

APR 20. 11:00 AM (ET)

Covenant Presbyterian Church
2126 WW. Edgewater Dr.
Albany, GA 31707

Tribute Wall

BE

“Katie, I came across Bruce's obituary just a few days ago. So sorry for your loss. I remember playing golf with Bruce on several occasions back in the early 90's. He was always a gentleman and I enjoyed our time together. He even gave me one of his clubs one time because he encouraged me to try it out and I hit it so well. I remember my and your days working together at Havertys. God bless you and your family. Bobby and Cindy Eason

Bobby Eason, Cindy Eason - September 01, 2024 at 04:59 PM

LG

“What an exceptional and wonderful man to know. Prayers and condolences to Miss Katie Sue, Drew, and the entire Gunnels family from the Garrisons.

Lynne Garrison - April 20, 2024 at 06:06 PM

DF

“A fine southern gentleman. Sorry I couldn't be with you all today but you are in my thoughts and prayers. I was a pesky child when he and Katie were dating and he wasn't my choice so when I went to church with them I sat between he and Katie so he couldn't sit by her. Katie you made a good choice and Bruce was a wonderful cousin, I truly loved him and will miss him.

Drucilla Fox - April 20, 2024 at 10:54 AM

JH

“ A great friend and golfing buddy for many years. Built my home. Have especially wonderful memories of our times on the course. Best competitor I ever known. Always wanted to be his partner. Will miss him. Katie, Betsy and I are so sorry for your loss.

John Holman - April 20, 2024 at 10:46 AM

TF

“ The Murphy Family purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of John Bruce Gunnels.



The Murphy Family - April 19, 2024 at 04:08 PM

JB

“ Jay and Gisele Bennett planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Bruce Gunnels.

Jay and Gisele Bennett - April 19, 2024 at 03:13 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of John Bruce Gunnels.



April 19, 2024 at 03:13 PM

PM

“ *Katie and family:
It was with much sadness that I learned of Bruce's passing. He was such a great guy.....I am so happy you were able to get moved before this happened. I will be bringing Pete to visitation and service tomorrow, so will see you then. My prayers for you, Drew, and your entire family.*

Patsy Martin - April 19, 2024 at 02:19 PM

AC

“ *Andy Boyett / Drew & Jeffrey Craven planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Bruce Gunnels.*

Andy Boyett / Drew & Jeffrey Craven - April 19, 2024 at 01:40 PM

AC

“ *Andy Boyett / Drew & Jeffrey Craven purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of John Bruce Gunnels.*



Andy Boyett / Drew & Jeffrey Craven - April 19, 2024 at 01:40 PM

BC

“ *Barbara Pippin, Colleen and Chip purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of John Bruce Gunnels.*



Barbara Pippin, Colleen and Chip - April 19, 2024 at 01:30 PM

TF

“ *The Whiting Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of John Bruce Gunnels.*



The Whiting Family - April 17, 2024 at 02:24 PM