



Wilbur S. Wood

January 25, 1923 - October 26, 2014

October 27, 2014

Mr. Wilbur S. Wood, age 91, of Palestine, died Sunday at his home in Palestine after a short illness. He was born January 25, 1923, in Palestine and was the son of Joe Wood and Minnie Beard Wood. Except for three and a half years of service in the U. S. Navy during World War II and several years in Washington, D.C. When he served as the President of the National Rural Letter Carriers Association, he has been a life long resident of the Palestine community.

Mr. Wood attended Palestine schools and graduated in 1941. After graduation from Palestine High School, he joined the U. S. Navy and served in the Pacific theatre. Upon returning from duty in the Navy, he and his brother owned and operated a general merchandise store in Palestine, and a shoe store and shoe repair business in Forrest City.

Mr. Wood was a fourth generation member of the Palestine Cumberland Presbyterian Church. His great-grandfather, grandfather, father and he all

served as Elders of the church. He became an Elder in 1946 and served many years as the song leader for the church. In addition, he served as Moderator of Little Rock-Burrow Presbytery, Moderator of Bartholomew Presbytery, Moderator of Arkansas Synod, and in 1987, he was elected as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian denomination- the highest office in the church. After his tenure as Moderator, he served for several years on the General Assembly Executive Committee.

He served on the national Board of Missions of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church for fifteen years. The last two years he was the president of the board. During this tenure on the board, the denomination built and operated numerous churches in Colombia, SA, Japan, and Hong Kong, as well as oversaw the construction of fifteen new church developments in the United States. He was recognized and honored by the Board of Missions as a Patron of Missions.

During his eighteen and a half years of service with the local board of education, the Palestine educational facility grew from a four building, unrated school, to an 'A' classification with the Arkansas State Department of Education.

Mr. Wood enjoyed many years of active and fruitful service in the civic and athletic affairs of his community. He was a charter member of the Lions Club in Palestine. He was the founder of the local Little League and Pony League baseball programs. Through his efforts a modern baseball facility at the local high school was completed. Today that facility continues to serve both the school and community.

Mr. Wood officiated at both high school basketball and football games for over thirty-one years. He was selected to referee many state basketball tournaments, All-Star games and State football play-offs. He refereed twenty

consecutive state basketball tournaments, and officiated at the state football play-offs from their inception until 1977 when he moved to Washington, D.C. For Many years, the Arkansas Athletic Association rated Wood as one of the top officials in the state.

In 1950, he became a substitute rural mail carrier, and in 1957, was appointed a regular carrier, serving Palestine on Route 1. In 1977, he was elected to the National Labor Relation Board (RLC) in Washington, D.C., and in 1981, he was elected President of the National Rural Letter Carriers Association, a position he held until his retirement.

In Washington, D.C., Mr. Wood was a friend and fellow worker with numerous senators and members of the House of Representatives. Former West Tennessee congressman, Ed Jones, once remarked that “Wilbur Wood was one of the finest men he had ever met, and a man who has served with dignity and distinction in Washington.” Because of his “roots” in a rural area of the nation, several members of Congress, Senators, and at least one U.S. President, would seek him out to ask for his advise. Congressman Jones said Wilbur Wood knew the rural areas of the nation better than anyone he knew.

Upon retirement and moving from Washington back to Palestine, he continued to travel for and address State Conventions of the Rural Letter Carriers Association. Mr. Wood received the President's National Special Service Award for his service at the 2005 National convention and was recognized at the Convention in 2007 for fifty years of membership in the National Rural Letter Carriers Association. He was an honorary member of seventeen different state Letter Carrier Associations. In addition, he served at the Field Representative for the Atlanta Postal Credit Union for twenty-seven years. Upon his retirement from the APCU, the chairman of Board of Directors said, “Wilbur Wood is a great human being and made many significant contributions

to the credit union. He has served us well and brought hundreds, maybe even thousands, of new members into the credit union during his tenure as field representative.”

Mr. Wood married Jorene Rounsavall and she preceded him in death in 2005. He married Mary Dell Ford Parker in 2006, and she survives him along with two sons; Scott Wood, and wife, Linda of Spokane, Washington, and Jerry Wood, and wife, Laurie, of Fort Smith, Arkansas, one daughter, Cindy Wood Fortenberry, of Palestine, four step-children, five grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren, and four great-great grandchildren. He had one son-in-law, Mike Fortenberry of Palestine, one great-grandson, Willie of Spokane, Washington, who preceded him in death.

Services for Mr. Wood will be held at the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Palestine, 11:00 A.M., Wednesday, with burial in Bell Cemetery. Visitation will be Tuesday evening, 6:00 till 8:00 P.M., at Stevens Funeral Home with Stevens Funeral Home in charge of arrangements. Memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 22718, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 72123-1718. You may log on to stevensfuneralhome.net for the on line registry.

Cemetery Details

Bell Cemetery

Palestine, AR 72372

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT **28**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Stevens Funeral Home
220 North Washington
Forrest City, AR 72335
(870) 633-5400
info@stevensfuneralhome.net
<https://www.stevensfuneralhome.net/>

Funeral Service

OCT **29**. 11:00 AM (CT)

Cumberland Presbyterian Church
Palestine, AR

Interment

OCT **29** (CT)

Bell Cemetery
Palestine, AR 72372

Tribute Wall

JJ

“ As I remember he was Union president during the creation of L routes. A issue which was much talked about back in the day. He spent much of his working life as a trade unionist Best to his family and loved ones.

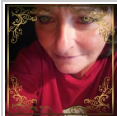
Joseph Johnson Jr - February 11, 2024 at 09:02 PM

TR

“ I want to express deepest sympathy to the Wood family. I had the pleasure of meeting and getting to work with Wilber many years ago as a National officer for the NRLCA and with the APCU. He was an admirable person and a friend. I had missed seeing him and I know he will be missed by everyone who knew him now. He was someone whom anyone who knew could not forget.

*Tommy Reid
South Carolina*

Tommy Reid - November 04, 2014 at 01:42 PM



Yes I sure miss wilber woods and my love goes out to Mrs.Mary Woods she was a great woman! I miss her !

Anita Taylor - January 19, 2015 at 01:05 AM

RC

“ Our deepest sympathy goes out to you. Wilbur was a very friendly, kind and enjoyable man to visit with at the State and National Conventions that we attended. When he went to work for APCU Credit Union we enjoyed going by the booth and saying "Hello". He always had a greeting and smile. He was one of the greatest. We've been missing him for a few years. He is in "God's Hands " not having anymore suffering. May God Bless!

Raymond and Katy Crain

Missouri Rural Letter Carrier and Auxiliary

Raymond and Katy Crain - October 29, 2014 at 04:45 PM

GC

“ I was so sorry to hear of Wilbur's passing. He was a good man, a good friend, and will be greatly missed. I was privileged to meet him about twenty-five years ago at my first Arkansas Rural Letter Carriers' Association State Convention. He was supportive and helpful as I walked in knowing absolutely nothing about the proceedings or my job as Convention Secretary. He was warm and helpful to everyone throughout the years. My deepest sympathy to Wilbur's family. I will miss him. Ginger Coats

Ginger Coats - October 29, 2014 at 07:44 AM

PH

“ Wilbur Wood was one of the nicest guys, with a great sense of humor and a real political savvy like no one else we've encountered. He was a great friend of rural carriers and to us personally. We had many good times with Wilbur, many meals and shared fellowship. We have kept in touch over the years and even just today sent him a letter before we found this news. Our prayers and thoughts are with his family and we send our sincerest sympathies on the loss of this great man. Thank you for sharing him with us all of these years.

*Pete and Melinda Harrington
Illinois*

Pete Harrington - October 28, 2014 at 11:17 PM



“ We have many wonderful memories of Wilbur at the Missouri Rural Carriers state conventions. He was part of our family.

Jeanette Brinkmann - October 28, 2014 at 09:57 PM