



## Bethel Forrest

January 20, 1924 - November 11, 2012

Bethel Forrest Ray, "Pappy Ray", age 88, of Arrington, TN passed away on Nov. 11, 2012 at the Life Care Center Hickory Woods in Lavergne, TN.

He was born in Sparta, TN in the Hampton Crossroads community on January 20, 1924 to William "W. S." and Eliza Hampton Ray. In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by son, Randall F. "Randy" Ray; brothers, Casto, Dan, Will, Hill, Dempse, & Erbie Ray; sisters, Alymria Graham, Mildred Malone, & Bonnie Nash.

He attended White County High School where he played football and was nicknamed Dynamite Ray. He served his country proudly in WW II in the Army Air Corps flying in a B-24 as the tail gunner. He attended Tennessee Tech University in Cookeville, TN. He retired from the Army National Guard with the rank of E-9, Command Sergeant Major after 34 years of full-time service.

A Celebration of his Life will be held Wednesday, Nov. 14, 2012 at 12 Noon at Woodbine Hickory Chapel with Dr. Jerry Smith & Bro. Reed Buntin officiating.

He is survived by his wife of almost 65 years, Bonnie Ray; sons, Eddie Ray, Arrington, TN, James Ray (Mary Ann), Murfreesboro, TN; daughters, Brenda Ray Walker (Tommy), Ridgetop, TN & Sandra Ray Presley (Fred), Arrington, TN; sister Ruby Mackie, Cookeville, TN; 11 Grandchildren, Lisa (Rob) Frasier,

Lori (Ben) Suggs, Melanie (Michael) Deaver, Emily Walker, Bo (Tina) Ray, Billy Ray, Ben (Courtney) Presley, Tim Presley, Mark Allen, Matt Ray, & Luke Ray; 27 great grandchildren.

Friends may visit with the family on Tuesday, Nov. 13, 2012 from 3-8pm at the Woodbine Hickory Chapel Funeral Home and on Wed. 11-12Noon the time of the service. Final resting place will be at Triune Cemetery in Triune, TN with Bro. Ronnie Johnson officiating. Grandsons and great grandsons Bo Ray, Ben Presley, Tim Presley, Jimmy Ray, Justin & Josh Matthews, Zack, Matt, Cody & Billy Ray will serve as pallbearers. Great grandsons Jessie Ray, Titus & Revin Suggs & Jarrett Frasier will serve as honorary pallbearers .

The family requests donations are made 'In Memory of Bethel Ray to his favorite ministry, Nazarene Compassionate Ministries, C/O Austin & Bell Funeral Home, 2619 Highway 41 South, Greenbrier, TN 37073.

Austin & Bell Funeral Home, Greenbrier Chapel, Phone 615.643.4000

# Tribute Wall

JW

“ *Brenda, I was so sorry to hear about the loss of your father. You and your family are in my prayers. Thank you for going ahead with the candlelight service last night (1129). I know it had to be difficult, but it was a blessing to me.*

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**Janet Wilkins** - November 30, 2012 at 10:22 AM

YG

“ *I will certainly miss my Uncle Bethel, but I know that he is enjoying the rewards of a good Christian life in Heaven with Almighty God. He was a fine Christian, a loving and dedicated family man and had a wonderful sense of humor. I'll miss his jokes and pranks, but my comfort is that I will see him one day again in Heaven. May God bring rest to his soul and comfort to all of us who miss him so much.*

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**Yautra Gay** - November 14, 2012 at 10:37 AM

WJ

“ DEAR FAMILY OF CSM BETHEL FORREST RAY; I AM THE CHAPLAIN OF THE AMERICAN LEGION POST 48 HERE IN SPRINGFIELD TN. I FELT IT IS MY DUTY TO PASS ON TO YOU NOT ONLY OUR DEEPEST HEARTFELT SYMPATHY IN YOUR LOSS BUT ALSO OUR GRATITUDE ON BEHALF OF EVERY VETERAN ORGANIZATION AND ALL ACTIVE DUTY SERVICEMAN THROUGHOUT THIS GREAT COUNTRY AND THE WORLD. MEN LIKE CSM RAY ARE FEW AND FAR IN BETWEEN. TO SERVE IN WWII IN THE AIR CORPS AS A TAIL GUNNER ON A B24 NO LESS WITH ONLY A NON BULLETPROOF HEAVY PLASTIC BUBBLE AROUND HIM AS PROTECTION. THEN TO SERVE 34YRS IN THE NATIONAL GUARD AND RETIRE AS AN E9 COMMAND SERGANT MAJOR WOW,HE IS A TRUE AMERICAN HERO. ONE OF AMERICAS GREATEST GENERATION. WE ARE LOOSING MEMBERS OF THIS GENERATION FAR TOO FAST. THE KNOWLEDGE THEY ARE TAKING WITH THEM IS LOST. MEN AND WOMEN OF NOT ONLY OF WWI AND WWII BUT ALL THE WARS BEFORE THEM AND THE ONES THAT HAVE FOLLOWED, ARE ALL HEROS WHO HAVE MADE THE USA THE GREATEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD. FAR TOO MANY OF TODAY'S GENERATION DO NOT REALIZE THAT FREEDOM IS NOT FREE, IT COMES AT A VERY HIGH PRICE. NOW I PRAY FOR OUR HEAVENLY FATHER TO PUT HIS LOVING ARMS AROUND YOU AND KEEP YOU AND GIVE YOU LOVE,PEACE AND COMFORT FOR NOW AND FOR EVERMORE. AMEN CHAPLAIN FRED PARKHURST

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**WALTER FRED PARKHURST JR** - November 13, 2012 at 11:32 PM

DG

“ Brenda, Tommy and family - our hearts are broken for yours as you spend these last days saying goodbye to your precious daddy. What a blessing to know that Jesus is holding him and he is walking those streets of Gold. We will continue to pray for strength and peace for each of you and your precious Mama. Love to you all.

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**Debbie & Arles Greene** - November 13, 2012 at 12:09 PM

JW

“ I am so sorry to hear of the death of your beloved husband, father, and grandfather. I remember Mr. Ray, or Sandra June's daddy, as I would have called him in my childhood, as a big man worthy of respect. I know he will be missed and I pray that your many memories of him will comfort you in your time of grief. May God bless you during your sorrow. My love and sympathy extend to the whole Ray family, and especially to you, Sandra, my dear friend.

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**Joy Vaughn Willwerth** - November 13, 2012 at 12:05 PM

DP

“ Pappy was a great man and I was truly blessed to know him. Knowing him made me a better man. Our thoughts and prayers are with Miss Bonnie and the family.

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**Daniel and Trish Porter** - November 13, 2012 at 11:30 AM

JM

“ 10 years and still thinking about the life you lived and impact you made.

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**Justin Matthews** - November 11, 2012 at 09:51 AM

AH

“ Bethel Forrest

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**Austin and Bell Funeral Home** - August 14, 2012 at 08:44 AM