



Wilson Sims

December 24, 1924 - June 26, 2022

Wilson 'Woody' Sims died at his home on Sunday, June 26, 2022. Woody is survived by his wife of 74 years, Linda Bell Sims; children, Linda Rickman Baer and husband Terry Blair, Nashville; Suzanne Sims Haizlip and husband Wilson Haizlip, Chattanooga; and Wilson Sims, Jr. and wife Ann Sims, Asheville, NC; grandchildren, Jeffrey Sims Edmonds and wife Lourdes Cuellar, Nashville; Philip Wilson Edmonds and wife Linsey Hayes Edmonds, Driggs, ID; Callie Elizabeth Sims, Mars Hill, NC; and Jenny Mariah Sims, Santa Barbara, CA; great-grandchildren, Panambi and Luna Edmonds Cuellar, Nashville; sister, Betty 'Bebe' Sims Hatcher, Atlanta. He is predeceased by his older brother Cecil Sims, Jr., killed in action in World War II, and by sister, Grace 'Susie' Sims Irvin.

Woody was born December 24, 1924, in Nashville to Grace Wilson and Cecil Sims. He attended Parmer School, Nashville, and graduated from The Webb School, Bell Buckle, TN, Senior Class President, and Honor Council Chairman. He entered Vanderbilt University in June 1942, simultaneously enlisting with the Marines Corps Reserve. After attending Vanderbilt for one year, he was sent by the Marine Corps to active duty at the University of North Carolina, graduating with a Bachelor's degree, 1946.

Upon graduation, Woody completed Marine Boot Camp at Parris Island, SC, was stationed at Camp Lejeune, NC, and attended Officer's School at

Quantico, VA. Commissioned a Second Lieutenant, 1945, Lt. Sims was assigned to the Commandant's Intelligence Staff, part of a team planning the proposed invasion of Japan. He was discharged from active duty upon the War's conclusion.

Woody graduated from Vanderbilt Law School, 1948, immediately joining the law firm of Bass, Berry & Sims in Nashville. In August of that year, he married Linda Bell of Springfield, TN. He was recalled to active duty in the Korean War, 1950, assigned to the US Naval School of Justice, Providence, RI, graduating with Honors and working as a legal officer for two additional years.

Mr. Sims practiced law with Bass, Berry & Sims for over 50 years in a variety of specialties, beginning as a trial attorney throughout many counties across TN. He eventually engaged in trials across the country. Over time, his practice shifted to labor law and then to general business practice. During these years he served as General Counsel or on the Board of Directors of over a dozen publicly and privately held companies. In later years, he confined his practice to commercial litigation and business consulting.

As an attorney, Mr. Sims contributed to the legal profession, serving as President of the Nashville Bar Association, Speaker of the House of Delegates of the Tennessee Bar Association, and President of the Tennessee Bar Association. He was a founder and first Chairman of the Tennessee Bar Foundation, President of the Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee, a member of the American Bar Association, the American Judicature Society, and a life member of the American Bar Foundation. He lectured to the Tennessee Bar Association on pro-bono work, the Tennessee Medical Association on medical malpractice and the Tennessee Manufacturers Association on labor matters.

Mr. Sims was actively involved in the political affairs of the state of Tennessee,

serving in the 1960's as Chairman of the Tennessee Commission on Human Relations, with a focus on racial issues and civil rights. In 1959 and 1960, he served as Chairman of the Davidson County delegation, in the Tennessee Legislature, helping to create and pass legislation terminating the state income tax. In 1987, he was cited by the Supreme Court of Tennessee "for his leadership and service to the legal profession as the first chairperson of the Commission on Continuing Legal Education," and in 1988, Mr. Sims was awarded the highest honor of the Nashville Bar Association, cited for his "outstanding contributions to his community and faithful service as a member of the Bar."

A loyal Tarheel, Woody was a life member of the Chancellor's Council and member of the Board of Visitors and Gerrard Society, University of North Carolina. A devote Commodore, he was a life member of the Chancellor's Council, member of the Oak Leaf Society and the Alumni Association Board of Directors, Vanderbilt University. He served the Vanderbilt Law School as Founder of the Dean's Council and President of the Alumni Association, awarded the Distinguished Service Award, Vanderbilt Law School.

His contributions to the local Nashville community are many, serving on the Board of Directors of the Nashville Chamber of Commerce, Hillwood Country Club, Belle Meade Country Club, and the Nashville YMCA. He was a member of the Watauga Society, and supported United Cerebral Palsy of Middle TN, the TN Kidney Foundation, and Matthew 25, Inc. He was a trustee of Meharry Medical College for 20 years and The Webb School for 70 years, where he earned the Distinguished Alumnus Award. He was a member of the President's Society of Martin Methodist College in Pulaski, TN, and long-time member, Nashville Society of Amateur Chefs. In his later years, he and his wife, Linda, tutored elementary school children in Nashville's Public School system.

Woody was an outdoorsman, spending much of his life farming, hunting, and fishing, with farm interests in Williamson, Robertson, Cheatham, and Perry counties, TN and Ballard County, KY. In his retirement years, he spent a substantial part of the winter months waterfowl hunting in Ballard County. Summer months were spent golfing and fly fishing at their family summer home in the mountains of Cashiers, NC, where he was a member and President of the Colony Club at High Hampton.

Woody was a member of the Cashiers United Methodist Church and the West End United Methodist Church, where he served on the Administrative Board.

A Celebration of Life Service will occur Wednesday, July 6, at 11:00 am, Main Sanctuary, West End United Methodist Church, Nashville. The Reverend Carol Cavin-Dillon, officiating. Live stream of the Service will be available at: www.westendumc.org/livestream.

Visitations: Tuesday, July 5, 4:00-6:00 pm and Wednesday, July 6, 9:30-11:00 am in Reed Hall. Private burial will occur at a later date.

The family would like to thank Margaret Lawrence and her wonderful team of angels at "Serving Our Seniors" for the care they have given the Sims' over the past three years, and Alive Hospice for their support. In lieu of flowers, the family respectfully requests remembrances be made to The Webb School, P.O. Box 488, Bell Buckle, TN 37020, Vanderbilt Law School, 131 21st Ave South, Nashville, TN 37203, or West End Methodist Church, 2200 West End Ave, Nashville, TN 37203.

Austin & Bell Funeral Home in Springfield is in charge of these arrangements.

AUSTIN & BELL FUNERAL HOME-

509 WALNUT STREET, SPRINGFIELD, TN (615) 384-1000

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 5. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

West End United Methodist Church
2200 West End Avenue
Nashville, TN 37203

Visitation

JUL 6. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

West End United Methodist Church
2200 West End Avenue
Nashville, TN 37203

Celebration of Life Service

JUL 6. 11:00 AM (CT)

West End United Methodist Church
2200 West End Avenue
Nashville, TN 37203

Tribute Wall

JM

“ We loved spending time with Woody and Linda who embraced life and made you feel special when you were in their presence. Woody had a great sense of humor and smile that lit up a room.

joyce Montgomery - July 24, 2022 at 09:42 AM

PT

“ So Sorry to hear of Mr. Sims passing over the years worked a number of projects with him related to water sewer systems in Nashville Area was always a pleasure to work with Mr. Sims. Sincear Symphony for family. Parker Toler

parker toler - July 05, 2022 at 03:50 PM

BC

“ Mr. Sims was one of the nicest people that I ever met. He and Linda would visit my parents in Memphis and they were always interesting, entertaining and kind. Woody was a true gentleman and displayed character, courage and courtesy. I feel fortunate to have known such a fine man in my lifetime.

Bob Canale

Bob Canale - July 05, 2022 at 10:49 AM

FH

Woody, was such a dear, sweet, loving, kind, gentle, loyal, soul. I was have blessed to spend two summers of quality time with Woody and Linda. To watch their love for each other was precious! He will truly be missed. My love to the family.

Faith & Craig Hartle

Faith Hartle - July 06, 2022 at 10:26 AM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Wilson Sims.*



July 01, 2022 at 12:02 PM



“ *Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Wilson Sims.*



June 28, 2022 at 04:15 PM