



Mr. Claude A. Petty Jr.

May 30, 1927 - June 2, 2022

Petty, Jr., Claude “Shine”

It is with great sadness and astonishing joy that we announce Claude “Shine” Petty’s arrival in Heaven at 11:11 Thursday morning, four days after his 95th birthday. Our hearts ache because his absence leaves an immeasurable and unfillable void, but beyond any doubt, we know that he was instantly enjoying great celebration and perfect rest in the presence of his best friend and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Born in Forest City (Burnt Chimney), NC, he was the beloved only child of Claude A. Petty, Sr. and Myra Hiers Petty. Despite growing up amidst the hardships of the Great Depression, his childhood was rich with faith, family, friends and overwhelming love. “Shine” grew up in Atlanta’s Cascade Heights West End where he played at John A. White park, rode the streetcar downtown with his parents to church, school, Rich’s Magnolia Room and the Fox. Knowing the value of and need for hard work, his jobs included being a dance instructor at Margaret Bryan’s, soda jerk at Steeger’s Drug Store, ice salesman, Christmas postal worker, department store gift wrapper and linen salesman, head lifeguard for the City of Atlanta & at Daytona Beach and playing saxophone with the band, The Solidaires. He joyfully gave the money he earned to his Mom to help with household expenses. Claude also grew up singing Gospel on the radio in Gaffney, SC with his many uncles and spent

wonderful days in Savannah with his first cousin & “brother,” Lee Brewin.

After graduation from Atlanta Boy’s High in 1945, Claude reported to boot camp at Great Lakes, IL, as a proud member of the U.S. Navy, finding out for the first time what real cold was when his hair froze on guard duty. Later he was selected to serve at the US Naval Research Laboratory in Washington, DC as an Electronics Technician’s Mate, where he was instrumental in helping the Navy learn how to bend radar over the horizon. After his honorable discharge at the end of the war, he continued to serve his country through the Naval Reserve. He was truly a member of World War II’s Greatest Generation.

As with many soldiers getting out of the service after World War II, he attended Georgia Tech on the GI Bill, living at home and riding the street car to class. Included in the many honors he received were Phi Eta Sigma, Eta Kappa Nu, Tau Beta Pi, Student Council, Student-Faculty Honor Committee, Dean’s List and Phi Kappa Phi. When he tried out for football, Coach Bobby Dodd “gently” encouraged him to choose another sport, thereby enabling him to excel on Tech’s golf, baseball and cross-country teams. When he “got out” of Georgia Tech in 1950 with degrees in Electrical Engineering and Math-related sciences, he went to work for Esso (Standard Oil) in Baton Rouge, LA as a Refinery Engineer.

While in Baton Rouge, he met a beautiful blonde just out of LSU, Johann Stegen, and they had a beautiful marriage from 1953 until Johann’s passing in 1999. They were blessed with three wonderful children, Claude, John and Pam. Claude and Johann loved to square dance, play bridge and travel internationally. They enjoyed many good years at their second home on Skidaway Island.

Friends for years, this Yellow Jacket married the second love of his life, Beth, a Georgia Bulldog. Despite a “slight” difference in their ages, they were true

soulmates and blessed with 20 wonderful years together. They enjoyed traveling, singing (praising the Lord together), playing golf (Beth mostly searched for golf balls), time at Lake Oconee and at the Old Edwards Club in Highlands, NC and with beloved family in MN, making as many memories as time allowed. Known as “Da,” he loved her children, Nathan and Claire, as his very own.

As proud as he was of his children, his love for his grandsons was unsurpassed. Teaching Will to play golf at an early age, letting him hit balls into the creek and traveling with him to Junior tournaments, they forged a bond and a love for the game and each other that never weakened. He and Spencer shared a love for golf and music, particularly Alabama. A father figure and mentor in life and in business, he was more than a grandfather to them.

Leaving Standard Oil in 1956, Claude moved back to Atlanta to be the Director of Plant and Development at Georgia Tech, helping to maintain and expand the campus. In 1961, he became Vice President and General Manager of the Atlanta Merchandise Mart, managing and expanding the space to two million square feet and putting Atlanta on the map as a retail competitor, while at the same time helping in the development, design and building of such places as Embarcadero Center in San Francisco. In 1968, Tommy Cousins lured him away to be President and Chief Executive of the apartment development operations of the Venture Apartment Company, a subsidiary of Cousins Properties and Vice President of Marketing for Cousins' Office Development Division. In 1971, Claude formed PC Associates with close friend, Jim Caswell. Topping the development of over 12 million square feet of various types of real estate, their pride and joy was Piedmont Center, a 55 acre, 2.2 million square foot office center in the heart of Buckhead that was not just a collection of buildings, but a haven for countless companies and their employees.

Claude's commitment to the improvement of the Buckhead community was also seen through the Buckhead Business Association, where he served both on the Board and as President. He formed Leadership Buckhead and encouraged the Young Bucks, programs that are still touching lives today. He worked with Ivan Allen, Sam Massell, Maynard Jackson, John Lewis and many more for the good of the city. He was also instrumental in routing Georgia 400 from I-285 through Buckhead as a Board member of the Buckhead Community Improvement District.

Claude was a lifelong, faithful and beloved brother of the Beta Psi chapter of Sigma Chi and one of its' strongest supporters. As one of the Honorary Chairs of the Chapter House renovation and an original member of the Board of Directors of the Beta Psi Foundation, many young men have had the opportunity to experience the brotherhood experience. In 2016, he was presented with the James Parks Caldwell award. In the words of a cherished brother and friend, "Claude has always led at times when it really mattered. Without his passion, love, Brotherhood and support, the Beta Psi Chapter would not be what it is today. His service is true friendship and he will ever be a credit to our Fraternity."

Claude's love and support for Georgia Tech continued throughout his life. He financially supported Athletics and Roll Call for 48 and 70 consecutive years, respectively, and gave in innumerable other ways, especially to the golf program. Over the years, he was a Trustee of the Alumni Association, member of the Alexander-Tharpe Board of Trustees, Golden Life Member of the Athletic Association, inductee of the Engineering Hall of Fame and a leader in the development of the Student Success Center. A lifelong lover of learning, he established a scholarship endowment through the College of Electrical Engineering, benefiting many students.

After retiring and moving to Roswell in 2004, Claude poured countless hours into Fellowship Christian School, where he mentored and advised many, led the capital campaign that built the middle school and athletic fields, created a prayer garden and formed the Dads on Campus (DOCS) group. In 2012, he was awarded the Paladin Legacy Award for his many contributions.

One of the greatest joys of “The Cobra’s” life was being on any golf course, playing and coaching. He could describe almost every hole he ever played, even down to the clubs used and where each shot landed, having six holes-in-one over his lifetime. Though he played many great courses all over the world (including Augusta National 5 times), his favorite was Settindown Creek, which he helped develop and design. Even playing against Arnold Palmer in college couldn’t compare to a Saturday morning with his buddies at Settindown - or the other four+ rounds a week he’d squeeze in. Other favorite courses include Atlanta County Club where he was a member of the Atlanta Classic Foundation and Super Senior Club Champion in 2003, Deer Creek at the Landings on Skidaway where he shot a 63 and loved playing with grandson, Will, Oakridge at the Landings, where he held the course record with a 4-under-par 68 and the Great Waters and Plantation courses at Lake Oconee and Highland’s Cove at Old Edwards Club.

Above all else, Claude’s faith in Jesus Christ was foundational; evident through his words, actions and interactions in daily life. He came to know Jesus as his personal Savior and best friend at the age of 12 and followed Him all the days of his life. His character, integrity and leadership qualities were ever present in his personal life, business relationships, community and church. Whether teaching Sunday school, serving on and chairing countless committees, chairing the Board of Deacons, singing with the Gospel quartet, the Wagoneers, coaching girl’s basketball, leading quietly behind the scenes or heading capital campaigns, he served tirelessly, pouring heart and soul into serving his Savior, particularly at Wieuca Road Baptist Church. He was a

humble recipient of the Bruce Batho award in 1992, a high honor for his leadership and service. A member of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church since 2004, Claude was also honored to serve on the Board of Right From the Heart Ministries.

A true Southern gentleman with a deep, rich voice, Claude was a charismatic leader and a born encourager, finding the good in people, truly believing each was special and important. He believed that the best gift you could give someone was to truly listen to them. He was a born creator, seeing God's beauty in everything from buildings to golf courses, birds to landscapes, even the varying colors of the sunset. A "human calculator" who derived the quadratic equation for fun and did crossword puzzles in ink, he was also a voracious reader.

Claude's "words to live by" are paraphrased from Philippians 4: "Don't worry. Pray always. Tell God your needs and thank Him for His answers. Then, you will receive peace, be content and have the assurance that you can do all things through Christ alone who gives you strength."

He embodied a favorite quote from Robert Woodruff: "There is no limit to what a man can do or where he can go if he doesn't mind who gets the credit."

Claude is survived by his wife, Beth, children Claude A. Petty, III of San Diego, CA, John A. Petty of Alexandria, VA and Pamela P. Mitchell of Sandy Springs, GA, step-children Nathan and Claire of Roswell, grandsons Will (Karey) Mitchell of Roswell and Spencer (Chloe) Mitchell of Macon, great-grandchildren Liam, Rylin and Landyn Mitchell and many cousins, nieces and nephews. Also beloved "family," Jim and Dee Woodard (Woodbury, MN) and Mike and Jenny Montgomery (Woodstock, GA) whose faithful love, support, prayer, laughter and hands-on help was pure blessed "sunshine" for us. The family also extends eternal thanks and much love to Gwen, Jen, Mike and Pepper of Trinity Hospice for their love and tender care.

A celebration of life will be held at Noon on Monday, June 6, 2022, at Wieuca Road Baptist Church, 3626 Peachtree Rd NE, Atlanta 30326. The Sanctuary will open at 11 a.m. for viewing. A reception will follow the service. Interment at Arlington Memorial Park, Sandy Springs, 3 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in his honor may be made to Right From the Heart Ministries (rightfromtheheart.org; 1507 Johnson Ferry Rd, Suite 100, Marietta, GA 30062) or the Claude Petty EE'50 Endowment at Georgia Tech via development.gatech.edu/ways-give or the Georgia Tech Foundation, 760 Spring Street, NE, Suite 400, Atlanta, GA 30308.

Northside Chapel, Roswell, GA (northsidechapel.com) has been entrusted with the arrangements.

Cemetery Details

Arlington Memorial Park

201 Mount Vernon Hwy NW
Atlanta, ga

Previous Events

Viewing

JUN 6. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Wieuca Road Baptist Church
3626 Peachtree Road NE
Atlanta, GA 30326

Funeral Service

JUN 6. 12:00 PM (ET)

Wieuca Road Baptist Church
3626 Peachtree Road NE
Atlanta, GA 30326

Reception

JUN 6. 1:30 PM (ET)

Wieuca Road Baptist Church
3626 Peachtree Road NE
Atlanta, GA 30326

Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Claude A. Petty Jr.*

October 08, 2022 at 11:37 AM



“ *I am a member of Ga Tech Sigma Chi, which is referred as the Beta Psi chapter; I was in class of '69, so am 20+ years younger than Claude. I was on the initial Beta Psi Foundation Committee as a Founding Member with him from early 2000, As a result of those initial efforts, the non-profit Foundation raised over \$1 million - now with investment results, is at \$2 million. The earnings from this endowment are used for scholarships for worthy brothers and for leadership development for the brothers, enhancing their lives now and in their futures. Claude provided impressive leadership for that initiative when it started, and it was gratifying he received recognition by getting the James Parks Caldwell award in 2016 at the annual Beta Psi Foundation Awards dinner. I had the honor a couple years after that Foundation Awards dinner to drive Claude home from a Foundation meeting he and I attended in mid-town. I asked him lots of questions about his career, which he graciously answered. Great conversation that I will long remember. He lived such a full and impactful life. He is an example for all of us who follow him. My condolences to the family, and my gratitude for having met and gotten to know Claude over the last 20 years. Bob Martin*

Bob Martin - June 08, 2022 at 07:26 PM

JW

“ When I think of what the definition of true ‘Gentleman’ is...Claude Petty is what comes to mind.

“Gentle, Polite, Kind and Giving” are the that words that come to mind when I think of Claude.

Those of us that knew Claude were lucky to have met him and spend time with him.

As he is looking down on me from Heaven above, I look forward to hearing from him as to how “hit/live” my life straighter and longer.

He will help me reduce my ‘life’s’ divots.

jason Woodard - June 07, 2022 at 03:09 PM

MA

“ I worked at Piedmont Center with Claude and Jim for 32 years. They were so generous and caring to me. Claude was a perfect example of a southern gentleman and always happy and smiling, that’s how he got his nickname Shine (Sunshine). Claude was one-of-a-kind and I value the years I spent with him. My deepest sympathy to Beth and other family members, he will certainly be missed. Love, Marcy Antle

Marcy Antle - June 05, 2022 at 06:18 PM

JP

“ John A. Petty lit a candle in memory of Mr. Claude A. Petty Jr.



John A. Petty - June 04, 2022 at 02:18 PM

JP

Your love, wisdom and belief in me will truly be missed dad. I love you, J-Bird

John A. Petty - June 04, 2022 at 02:21 PM



“ *Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Claude A. Petty Jr..*



June 04, 2022 at 01:51 PM

KL

“ *Shine was a magnet, both in our family and in the many communities he was a part of, drawing folks in with his confidence, enthusiasm, positivity, and charisma. Boy, will he be missed! Grateful that he had 95 years on this earth. love, Kathleen Brewin Lewis*

Kathleen Brewin Lewis - June 04, 2022 at 01:11 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Claude A. Petty Jr..*



June 04, 2022 at 01:06 PM

BC

“ *What a beautiful life and legacy. Claude always had a kind word and smile. He loved you all to the depths of his soul - it was obvious and precious. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. Much love and grace to you.*

Becky (Manning) Carroll - June 04, 2022 at 12:46 PM

GH

“ *Claude’s warm, sincere greetings have invited those of us who have been in his presence to relax and enjoy the humility of his achievements & accomplishments.*

George Houston - June 04, 2022 at 12:25 PM