



## SFC (Ret) Ernest Lee Ray Sr.

October 2, 1939 - February 23, 2025

Ernest Lee Ray, Sr., son of the late Ernest Leo Ray and Margaret Lucille (Bryant) Ray, was born October 2, 1939, in Louisville, Kentucky. As a young boy, Ernest grew up in Jefferson County, Kentucky where he attended school.

At the age of 18, Ernest entered the United States Army and served his country until his retirement in 1977 after 20 years of faithful service. He had attained the rank of Sergeant First Class and earned several awards and commendations; some of which include the Combat Infantry Badge, Vietnam Service Medal (1-2), National Defense Service Medal, Purple Heart, Professional Unit Citation, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Mechanics Badge, DS Identification Badge, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Overseas Service Bars (2), Good Conduct Medal -6, and Republic of Vietnam Civic Action w/Palm. During his time in the military, Ernest served as a drill instructor and took great pride in instructing his men.

On June 15, 1974, Ernest was united in marriage to Julie Lynn Kinworthy in St. Robert, Missouri. They shared over 50 years of marriage together and were blessed with four children: Betty Jean, Rhonda, Ernest Lee II, and Dennis D.

Over the years, Ernest worked in many capacities after retiring from the military. He worked as a postman and brickmaker in Kentucky, sheriff's

department, Safeway Moving Storage, Empire Propane, St. Robert Fire Department, Waynesville City Fire Department and the Waynesville Rural Fire Department. He loved serving and was able to continue that in the different jobs he had.

In his spare time, Ernest loved going to auctions and collecting tools. He also was up for a good game of cards, especially knock poker. He was always ready with a joke or a quick-witted comeback. He enjoyed spending time with his family and friends.

Ernest passed away Sunday, February 23, 2025, in his home having attained the age of 85 years. He will be sadly missed but fondly remembered by all those that knew and loved him.

He leaves to cherish his memory, his wife: Julie Lynn Ray of the home; three children: Ernest Ray II of Laquey, MO, Betty Jean Post of Elizabethtown, KY, and Rhonda Perdue of Fulton, MO; ten grandchildren: Kayla Hernandez (Brandon) of Richland, MO, Ashley Maness (Nathan) of Richland, MO, Carolynne Booth of St. Robert, MO, Eden Ray of Lebanon, MO, Ernest Ray III of Lebanon, MO, Evangeline Ray of Lebanon, MO, Elana Ray of Lebanon, MO, Becky Post of the State of Kentucky, Angel of the State of Kentucky and Amanda Post of Elizabethtown, KY; several great grandchildren; three siblings: Brian Ray (Patty) of Louisville, KY, Diane Ray of Louisville, KY, and Jean Benzinger (Andy) of the State of Ohio; several nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends.

In addition to his parents, Ernest was preceded in death by his son, Dennis D. Ray and his younger brother, David Lamond Ray (March 6, 1968).

Even though he is gone from our sight, Ernest's commitment to his country and family will live on in our hearts forever.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p.m. Thursday, March 6, 2025 in the Memorial Chapels and Crematory of Waynesville / St. Robert with Pastor Danny Graves officiating. Soloist Becky Lercher sang "In the Garden", "The Old Rugged Cross" and "I'll Fly Away". The song "Long Black Train" by Josh Turner was played. Serving as escorts were family and friends. Burial with military honors followed in the Idumea Cemetery of Laquey, Missouri. Military honors were provided by the United States Army of Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. Services were under the care and direction of Memorial Chapels and Crematory of Waynesville / St. Robert.

Memorial contributions may be made in memory of SFC (Ret) of Ernest Lee Ray, Sr. and may be left at Memorial Chapels and Crematory of Waynesville / St. Robert.

# Cemetery Details

## Idumea Cemetery

25975 Sherwood Lane  
Laquey, MO 65534

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR 6. 1:00 PM.

Memorial Chapels And Crematory Of Waynesville / St. Robert

## Service

MAR 6. 2:00 PM.

Memorial Chapels And Crematory Of Waynesville / St. Robert

# Tribute Wall

RW

“ *Worked with Ernest ray at Safeway for quite a while , good person* ”

ronnie wilson - March 12, 2025 at 05:32 PM

MT

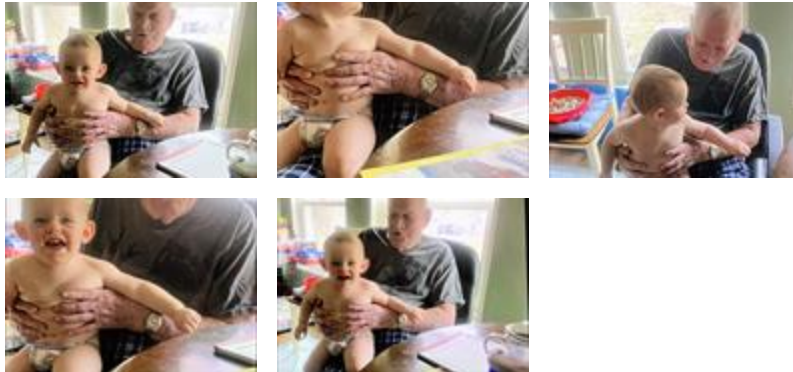
“ *prayers for comfort and healing for all of you in this time of loss* ”



Michelle Tucker - March 03, 2025 at 12:40 PM

CG

“ *Christopher II and his pawpaw* ”



carolynne booth ( granddaughter) - February 27, 2025 at 09:50 PM

EI

“ I have so many memories of my Dad but I do believe the best ones are of when he was surrounded by his grandkids and great grandkids. He would just light up and would do everything he could for them. He especially was so proud of my son as being number 3. He is missed already and I will carry his memory with me always.

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**Ernest Lee Ray II** - February 27, 2025 at 05:41 PM