



William Michael "Mike" Jones

June 3, 1948 - March 28, 2020

William Michael "Mike" Jones, 71, of Centralia went to be with the Lord on Saturday, March 28, 2020 at St. Mary's Hospital in Centralia at 11:54 A.M.

Mike was born June 3, 1948 in Centralia, the beloved son of Jeanne Jones and the late Edward "Sonny" F. Jones Jr. He married the love of his life, Sheree Rose Springer on October 2, 1982, thus celebrating 37 years of life together.

He is survived by his wife Sheree, his only son Jeff and lovely wife Laura, mother Jeanne, beloved little sister Jan Jones Heischmidt and husband Ed and several nieces, nephews and cousins.

Mike was preceded in death by his father Edward "Sonny" Jones Jr, grandparents Edward F. Sr. and Gertrude Jones, and grandparents Fred and Louise Hellmeyer.

Mike was baptized at the First United Methodist Church in Centralia as a child, confirmed into the church as a teenager, and remained a faithful member serving on various committees including Pastor Parish, Board of Trustees, and Finance. He was a Sunday School teacher for many years and his beautiful tenor voice graced the choir for over 56 years.

He graduated from Centralia High School in 1966, Kaskaskia College in 1968, and the University of Illinois in 1970 with a degree in communications. He always enjoyed writing and was active in journalism early on as a reporter for the CHS newspaper Sphinx and as editor of the Kaskaskia College Scroll. Mike returned to Centralia to begin his first and only career with the Centralia Sentinel where over the span of 37 ½ years he held many positions including part time sports reporter, Area Editor, City Editor, Managing Editor, and Senior News Editor. Michael had a solid passion for giving back to the community he had loved as a child by serving on many local boards including the Salvation Army, Centralia History Museum, and the Board of Trustees at St. Mary's Hospital. It was Mike who spearheaded an effort to return Centralia's rich tradition of this community's historic promise for the future through the erection of the sign "Centralia, Your Opportunity" at the corner of Broadway and Oak.

He was considered to be a trusted messenger of the news with his unbiased and integrous reporting. Through the keystrokes of his two-fingered typing skills, Mike served as a host to many stories that impacted the lives of our community. He was considered a fixture at the Centralia Police Station and the eyes and ears of a generation of loyal readers. It was his gifted intellect and talented writing that would showcase the stories he reported, including an annual grocery price check each January, coverage of local events, and interviews with recognizable figures including Jesse Jackson, Sen. Barack Obama, Tiny Tim, Paul W. Tibbitts IV, Sir Peter Imbert, the head of Scotland Yard and Sam Walton. He sat in on and reported on so many meetings and gatherings, he was often considered an honorary member of many organizations in the Centralia area.

Mike also possessed a very witty sense which led to many famous April Fool's stories including Centralia being located on a major international highway, the Concord landing at the Centralia airport, an alligator being loose in Centralia

sewers (he even received a phone call from Australia about this story) , and the towns of Centralia, Wamac, and Central City merging to become CenWamaCity.

Mike's first love was meteorology though he chose journalism as his longtime career because "things happen and you never know what's coming next." He wasn't the biggest fan of math and knew that was important for a career in Meteorology. Those who knew Mike best are thankful that math wasn't his strong suit because he became a staple in the pages of the Centralia Sentinel publications and one of the most trusted journalists who was truly appreciated and respected by the community.

Mike's passions were reading history books, listening to classical music, traveling the world, watching the St. Louis Cardinals play ball, cuddling with his girlfriends (his cats) and unsurprisingly, tuning into the Weather Channel throughout the day.

A Celebration of Life Gathering will be held Sunday, June 6, 2021 from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM at the First United Methodist Church in Centralia. Memorials to the First United Methodist Church of Centralia and the Centralia History Museum will be received at the Sutherland Garnier Funeral Home at 235 North Sycamore Street Centralia, Illinois 62801, (618)532-3523, who is honored to be of service to the Jones Family. Friends and family may visit Mike's Obituary on www.sutherlandfuneralhome.com and submit Online Condolences for the family.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JUN 6. 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM.

First United Methodist Church of Centralia

Tribute Wall



“ *Sutherland Funeral Homes, Cemetery and Cremation Services created a Webcast in memory of William Michael "Mike" Jones*



Sutherland Funeral Homes, Cemetery and Cremation Services - April 04, 2020 at 10:37 AM

PY

My deepest condolences to all of you. The service was perfect.. I hope you can all feel the hug that I would have given to each one of you.

Patty Young - April 04, 2020 at 08:41 PM

MJ

Sheree, Jeff and Jeanne, my thoughts are with you all. What a wonderful service. Sending you all m'y love. Just wish we could havé been there in person. We love you!

Mary Jacobs - April 05, 2020 at 11:28 AM

DR

Been thinking a great deal about cousin Mike, and his quiet, thoughtful ways. How he could make situations come alive with his words. Families are meant to be together through the good and not so good. Mike was loved by so many and had many families he was a part of. I wish I could have been there in person but I do believe his spirit knows no bounds now. He has every answer to every question he ever had and he is not contained by his earthly body. He is now a part of everything and signs of his presence are everywhere. I love you and miss you. Hugs and love to Aunt Jeanne and all my cousins at this time and always.

Dana R Reynolds - April 05, 2020 at 01:27 PM

DJ

My dear sweet friend, there are no words to describe how my love pours out to you. Thanks for allowing us to view Mike's service, it was perfectly glorious. His physical absence will be felt by many, but his spirit will be ever present. No one can replace his skills of the checking and spelling of words for us. I look forward to the opportunity to share in a "Celebration of Mike's Life" with you and your family.

Sending prayers to you, Jeff & Laura, Jan & Ed and Jeanne.

Debbie

Debbie Jones - April 22, 2020 at 01:08 PM

JH

“ *So sorry for your loss. Praying for peace and strength during this difficult time.*

Judy Guenther Hartnell

Judy Hartnell - April 05, 2020 at 09:18 PM

BJ

“ *Sheree my heart breaks for you, Jeff & the family. I'm so sorry I can't be there to support you. Just know that you are loved & thought about often. Your loving friend, BJ*

bj - April 04, 2020 at 09:19 PM

BW

“ *So glad we could view the memorial service. Mike was a dear friend both at work and even after we both retired from the newspaper . Sherri, you and Jeff are in our prayers during this difficult time*

Bonnie Ward - April 04, 2020 at 02:01 PM

DC

“ I am sending thoughts to my friend, Sheree. I wish we could all be together with you at this time. And to Jan, keep all of your memories in that place only sibling have. Peace.

DiAnn Caraker - April 04, 2020 at 01:05 AM

CZ

“ Hello Sheree how are you and jeff doing, I am so sorry about this



Claudia zipp - April 02, 2020 at 02:53 PM

WH

“ We want to send our condolences to you all! Our thoughts and prayers are with family and friends.

Wayne & Vickie Houser - April 02, 2020 at 07:02 AM

MS

“ Very sorry for your loss. Mike was a great reporter. Wamac was lucky to have him.

Marian Suhl - April 01, 2020 at 03:48 PM

BH

“ My memories of Mike go back to the 1960’s as his high school journalism teacher, as well as adviser of the Sphinx newspaper. He had a desire for accuracy and an easy-to-read writing style. In addition, his friendly nature and sense of humor made for top quality interviews. My wife and I both were teachers at Centralia for six years and left in 1968 to join the staff at Lake Land College, Mattoon, IL. On our return visits to Centralia we enjoyed chatting with Mike as he brought us up-to-date on Centralia happenings. He truly was an outstanding journalist.

Bill and Roberta Hollada

Bill and Roberta Hollada - March 31, 2020 at 11:40 PM



“ Condolence Snacks was purchased for the family of William Michael "Mike" Jones.



March 31, 2020 at 08:29 PM

VL

“ Many fun and happy memories of the Jones family from many years ago. Our love and sympathy to all.

Victor & Jennifer Long - March 31, 2020 at 04:25 PM

CH

“ I LOVED MIKE DEARLY AND RESPECTED HIM IMMENSELY EVER SINCE MY DAYS AT THE SENTINEL. HE WAS ONE HECK OF A JOURNALIST AND ONE HECK OF A GUY, AND, MAN, COULD HE MAKE ME LAUGH! SHEREE AND FAMILY, MY PRAYERS ARE WITH YOU. WITH MUCH LOVE, CHRIS HUNT

CHRIS HUNT - March 31, 2020 at 04:01 PM

MW

“ I had the honor and privilege to get to know Mike as we served together for a few years on the board of the Centralia Area History Museum. He was a fine man. I enjoyed talking to him and his wonderful sense of humor. My condolences to his family.

Michael Warden - March 31, 2020 at 10:50 AM

RJ

“ Rest In Peace Cuz and fellow punster! I will miss solving the problems of the world! Love you much, Ron



Ronald Johnson - March 30, 2020 at 09:48 PM

TS

“ I worked for Mike for awhile when I was the Sentinel librarian in the late 1980s, and he was the news editor. It was a great newspaper with him in that position. I still remember him fondly after all these years. He was great to work for and great to know. My sympathy to all the family. Theresa Schaefer

Theresa Schaefer - March 30, 2020 at 09:47 PM

JT

“ Happy heavenly homecoming Cousin Mike. You fought the good fight and now you can rest in Heaven. Sending all my love to you and your family.
Love, Cousin Jo

Jo Ann Thornton - March 30, 2020 at 08:56 PM

AB

“ Ann Breuer lit a candle in memory of William Michael "Mike" Jones



Ann Breuer - March 30, 2020 at 07:47 PM

PY

“ I am thinking of all of you at this time. Heaven got the best, when Mike got there. I always loved when the family got together when we were kids. Mike came with his MADD magazine and assigned parts. I could not wait for him to get there. Mike was an amazing, caring man and a true treasure to any who knew him. Centralia lost a good one.

Patty Young - March 30, 2020 at 07:42 PM

KT

So sorry for all of our loss . May he Rest In Peace. I love you all my family.

Kathy Turner - March 30, 2020 at 09:11 PM

KP

My heart breaks for you, Sheree, Jeanne, Jeff & Laura, Jan & Ed and all others that loved Mike. Such a gentle soul.

Kathy Pearce - March 31, 2020 at 08:21 PM

TJ

“ Mike what an honor it was to worship and sing with you. You were more than a friend. You and Sheree are like family. Terry and I were always honored when we were remembered during joyful times but especially during times of loss and pain. Thank you for all you have done for our world. We will miss you.

Terry and Mystee Johnston - March 30, 2020 at 07:16 PM

RA

Ray and I are so sorry for your loss. I remember when you guys were getting married and were getting married. It seems like yesterday. You sang at our wedding and we had a wonderful time. Mike always knew the right thing to say. Prayers are for you and Jeffrey and your family.

Ray and Melodie Ainslie - March 31, 2020 at 08:04 PM

JM

I was in Mike's 1966 CTHS graduating class, shared some classes, and remember his subtle humor. He was a great guy. My deepest condolences to his family and friends.

Jim McCarty

Jim McCarty - April 06, 2020 at 10:27 PM