

## **Burkey Lilly**

**April 1, 1927 – December 6, 2017**

(From: [Hastingsfuneralhom.com](http://Hastingsfuneralhom.com))

Burkey Lilly, 90, of Morgantown, entered the Kingdom of Heaven on December 6th, 2017. Burkey lived valiantly for two years after a stroke, but passed peacefully at his home with family, friends and wonderful care givers near his side.

Burkey was born Apr. 1, 1927 in Nimitz, WV to his late parents James Sanford and Vevie Ann Lilly.

Burkey was preceded in death by his wife of 68-years, Mary Louise Lilly (Apr. 20, 2017), his parents and ten siblings: Darlow, Corbett, Tenny, Emory, Daly, Ira, Pearl, Dempsey, Maxine and Jonathon "Dott". Burkey was the youngest of eleven children. He is survived by his son, Keith and wife Paula, son, Warren and wife Carolyn and daughter, Sarabeth Blosser and husband Ron. He has five grandchildren: Lauren Roney and husband Brandon, Megan Malott and husband Sam, Austin Lilly, Kyle Stephens and Kory Stephens; and three great grandchildren: Faith, Jocelyn and Rory.

Mr. Lilly graduated from Hinton, WV High School (1945). As a young man, he honorably served in the U.S. Marine Corps having been discharged in 1948. Burkey and Marylou started their lives together in 1948 as he began employment with the C&O Railroad from '48 – 1950. He graduated from West Virginia University with BS and Masters degrees in Agriculture in 1954 and 1962, respectively. Burkey found a passion in agriculture and served as a County Agricultural Agent in Lewis, Hardy and Monongalia counties, WV during the period from 1954 - 1968. The family car was always loaded with sufficient equipment to process a hundred or so head of livestock. In 1968 he transitioned to a different career path and public/private service as he worked in Economic Development for Dominion Energy (Hope Natural Gas) till 2002. He was a passionate and dynamic contributor to the state of West Virginia and the northcentral region of the state regarding industry and job growth.

In 1963, Burkey purchased his own farm. He loved to apply his agriculture education and demonstrate what he taught to others through the County Extension Service. He engineered the return to productivity of farm land that had been left nonproductive from early mining activities of the '40s and '50s. He taught life

lessons and passed along his work ethic on the rolling terrain of Monongalia County, WV and Greene County, PA – evidence of which endures today. Burkey always applied himself to the farm. After his career change, he regularly capped off a day at the office with an evening of farm labor till darkness or dew ended the day. Beef cattle were his joy, but he always had a garden. He and Marylou preserved many fruits and vegetables for a growing, healthy family.

Burkey was a 50+ year member of the Joseph D. Summers #173 Blue Lodge of the Freemasons and the Morgantown Scottish Right of the 32 Degrees. He was a member of the Morgantown Chapter #30 and the Morgantown Commandery #18. He was also a member of the Osiris Shriners.

Friends, acquaintances and family loved Burkey's smile, unique voice, humor and opinions on all manner of topics. His phone rang constantly regarding topics from agriculture to zinnia. Burkey always exhibited devotion to God, a strong work ethic, love and providing for family and a desire to help his community and the state of West Virginia.

Burkey always had a vision for the future and particularly for his children and grandchildren. A sound mind and/or a strong back were not to be wasted. He has left expectations and made preparations for future generations to better themselves, but it will take commitment and hard work to see the full potential. Not everyone needs to be a farmer, but everyone needs to look out for one-another, communicate with family and friends and strive for excellence in all they do. And, strike a healthy balance between work and recreation.

In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to Morgantown Hospice, an Amedisys Partner, 3596 Collins Ferry Road, Suite 250, Morgantown, WV 26505 ([www.amedisys.com](http://www.amedisys.com)) or the American Breast Cancer Foundation (10400 Little Patuxent Parkway Suite 480, Columbia, MD 21044 <https://www.abcf.org/donate>). Both organizations were an important part of the comfort both Burkey and Marylou received right up to their departure to Heaven.

Per directive, Burkey will be cremated and his cremains will be joined with those of his beloved wife Marylou (Apr. 20, 2017). A joint life celebration for Burkey and Marylou will be conducted at the First Baptist Church of Morgantown on Dec. 20, 2017, from 1:00 – 4:00 PM with a joint memorial service following at 4:00 PM. Light refreshments will be provided and a glimpse of two wonderful lives will be on display.