



J. T. Utley

February 10, 1932 - September 3, 2025

J.T. Utley passed away on Wednesday, September 3, 2025, at his home surrounded by his family, he was 93. He was the son of William Ruben and Minnie Pitts Utley, was born February 10, 1932 in Corinth, MS. He married Dora Jean Jackson (Ragan) Harris, May 1, 1951. J.T. worked as a farmer and rancher for many years raising the family in Parkin then later in Wynne on the W.R. Gross Farm. He loved farming and ranching however, made a career move to a state job that afforded him benefits of medical insurance, vacation and a retirement fund. April 1, 1973, he was the first person hired to work at Village Creek State Park. He retired Sept. 14, 1998, as maintenance supervisor after a career that spanned 25 years, five months, and 14 days. The headlines for his retirement announcement read "It's a park now, no small thanks to J.T. Utley." The Wynne Progress stated "Having grown up in Wynne and Cross County, Utley is a walking, living and breathing history book. He was responsible for getting the land ready to build upon. He did land surveys, dug up to 2600 acres of peach orchards and cleaned up hog pens that use to make up what is now the Visitor Center at Village Creek. He knows where every water line is on this park." J.T. made the wood signs not only at Village Creek but for a local attorney's office in Wynne. He met several dignitaries including past President Bill Clinton and received a special invitation to the

Presidential Inauguration in Washington, D.C. State employees called him several times when visiting the park after his retirement looking for the area to measure for the earthquake zone. He knew exactly where to show them. A self-educated man J.T. traveled on his job to Oklahoma and Kansas, transporting a fish hatchery for the farm. His travels for Village Creek took him to several other parks. Learning to travel by landmarks was a challenge. His love and talent for woodworking is unique.

He always had a deep love for his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and spending time with them was all he ever really wanted. He loved hunting, fishing, finding arrow heads and rocks. He had beautiful gardens and loved to share the bounty with family and friends. Several years of growing gourds enticed his fascination. Mia was always having to order new things from his catalog to try. He had a great love for his birds, specifically the Martins, Finch and Hummingbirds, and birdhouses, His great love and companion was his Yorkshire Terrier, Trooper and his cat, Tom. A Christian man, he attended Levesque Assembly of God church until his health began to fail and was blessed he could watch on TV from the comfort of his home.

J.T. is survived by daughters, Marie Willis (Charles) Jonesboro, Mia Pitts (Granddaughter but more like a daughter and was his caregiver) Wynne, Barbara Haynes (Archie) Sardis, MS, Frances Andrews, Wynne, sister, Linda Sue Turpin (Kenneth) Clarksville, brothers, Lester Utley (Clara) and Robert Allen

Utley, Wynne, J.D. Utley and Danny Utley (Robin)
of Jonesboro a host of grandchildren and great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, wife, Dora Jean, daughters, Minnie
(Lisa)

Crawford and Shirley Douglas, sons, Billy Utley and Roy Harris, sisters,
Mildred Utley,

Mary Ruth Utley, Katie Wells and Helen Utley, brothers, Floyd Utley, Leon
Utley and

James Everett Utley.

The family would like to thank Dr. Willard Burks for all the years of seeing
daddy not just

as a patient but as a dear friend. Thank to NEA Cardiology Group, Claudia,
Brooke and Billie.

Also, Dr. Stan Bradshaw, Dr. Cathey, Dr. Beaton of Wynne Medical Center,
Cross Ridge

Community Hospital nursing staff (for room B25) and Legacy Hospice for
showing so

much care and compassion.

Being a sustaining member of St. Jude's, the family ask in lieu of flowers for
donations

to be made to St. Jude's Research Hospital, Memphis, TN.

Visitation will be held on Sunday, September 7, 2025, at Kernodle Funeral
Home from 5 to 7 PM. Funeral services will be held on Monday, September 8,
2025, at 11 AM at Kernodle Funeral Home. Burial will be in Harris Chapel
Cemetery.

Cemetery Details

Harris Chapel Cemetery

82 Co Rd 720
Wynne, AR 72396-8027

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 7. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Kernodle Funeral Home
315-325 E. Union Avenue
Wynne, AR 72396
(870) 238-2323
kernodlefuneralhome@gmail.com
<https://www.kernodlefh.com/>

Funeral service

SEP 8. 11:00 AM (CT)

Kernodle Funeral Home
315-325 E. Union Avenue
Wynne, AR 72396
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kernodlefuneralhome@gmail.com
<https://www.kernodlefh.com/>

Interment

SEP 8 (CT)

Harris Chapel Cemetery
82 Co Rd 720
Wynne, AR 72396-8027

Tribute Wall

JU

“ Jerry, Stefanie, and Jaycee Mae Utley purchased the *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* for the family of J. T. Utley.



Jerry, Stefanie, and Jaycee Mae Utley - September 05, 2025 at 12:14 PM

TW

“ I can't even begin to list how Uncle Jay, has touched my life. From my first job as a boy not even 10 years old chopping cotton, to his encouragement throughout my adult life. I will forever cherish his memory, his humor, and his strength. I know he is now resting in eternity and completely restored. I await the promise of that great reunion day, when we shall meet again.

Tony Wells - September 05, 2025 at 08:50 AM

MB

“ My deepest condolences for the family during this time of loss.



Marice Boardman - September 05, 2025 at 08:43 AM