



Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland

November 29, 1944 - December 7, 2020

Ronald Edward Kirkland, Guntersville, AL

On December 7, 2020, Ronald Edward Kirkland, age 76, moved into his heavenly home. He made this transition peacefully and was delivered into the comforting arms of his Lord and Savior.

He was affectionately known as “RK” to his friends and business associates, of whom there were many. Those fortunate enough to be his family members knew him best as Dad, Pop, or Ronnie.

Ron was born on November 29, 1944 in Geneva, Alabama. For most of his working life, Ron was affiliated with sales and executive leadership. Ron joined Aflac in 1975 and served in nearly every role in the corporate sales hierarchy, including National Director of Sales. During his decades-long career, Ron was most proud of his 2019 induction into the Aflac Hall of Fame, an honor bestowed on a select few of the corporation’s legendary employees. Ron was a gentle man whose laugh was contagious and whose jokes were often silly. However, there was always a hint of wisdom embedded in almost anything he said. His kind heart and strong sense of humanitarianism were reflected in the countless selfless acts he so frequently and silently performed. Often, he would make personal sacrifices so others could travel a less difficult road. Throughout his life, he became a mentor to thousands of business associates, who still consider him to be the dynamic inspiration behind their success. He motivated others, drawing on his own experiences to guide his colleagues around potential pitfalls while achieving their goals. He never took

sole credit for his victories, but rejoiced in sharing the “win” with his team. Ron was always solicited for advice and counsel from those who recognized his trustworthiness and wisdom. He was beloved by people from all walks of life, and made each person he met feel as if there was no one else more important to Ron. He was a stranger to no one and a friend to all.

Beyond all his impressive character traits, he was first and foremost a man of God, willing to teach God’s Word through conversation or by example. His deep love for his family was evident in every action Ron took. He leaves behind his beloved wife of 57 years, Jo Ann Crosslin Kirkland. He is survived by three children: Ronald Lee Kirkland of Brentwood, Tennessee; Shane Kirkland (Erin) of Killen, Alabama; and Josh (Colleen) Kirkland of Alpharetta, Georgia as well as his precious grandchildren: Briana Kirkland of Dumfries, Virginia; Zachary Kirkland of Florence, Alabama; Grant (Harley) Kirkland of Anacortes, Washington; and Coen, Kaleb, and Ava Laws of Alpharetta, Georgia. He is also survived by his sister-in-law, Mary (Sam) Gaines of Knoxville, Tennessee. He leaves a host of cousins, nieces, nephews and devoted friends nationwide. Ron was preceded in death by his dear mother, Nell Fowler Armstrong.

Free Life Worship Center, located at 255 North Main Street, Boaz Alabama, will host the family’s receiving of friends on Tuesday, December 15, 2020, between the hours of 11:00 am and 1:00 pm CST, with funeral service to immediately follow. Interment will be at Memory Hill Cemetery located at 5937 US Highway 431, Albertville Alabama. Pastor Jeff Stanford will lead the funeral services. The service, beginning at 1:00 pm CST, will also be livestreamed at Free Life Worship Center’s Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/freelifeworship>

In addition to the traditional services there will be a memorial service at Free Life Worship Center to celebrate the iconic life of Ron Kirkland within the next few months. Details to follow.

The family would like to thank the thousands of people who offered prayers for Ron and the family. We are grateful for the dedication and kindness shown to

Ron by the professional caregivers at Marshall North Hospital. Finally, we are grateful to Ron's Free Life Worship Center family who so selflessly provided support to the family during the past weeks and days.

"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength they will soar on wings like Eagles. They will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." ~ Isaiah 40:31

Cemetery Details

Memory Hill Cemetery

5975 US Highway 431
Albertville, AL 35950

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC **15**. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Free Life Worship Center
Free Life Worship Center 431 Campus
Mountainboro, AL 35956

Service

DEC **15**. 1:00 PM (CT)

Free Life Worship Center
Free Life Worship Center 431 Campus
Mountainboro, AL 35956

Tribute Wall



“ *Forever Beloved was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.* ”



December 15, 2020 at 05:30 PM



“ *Large Basket Garden was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.* ”



December 15, 2020 at 10:34 AM



“ *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.* ”



December 15, 2020 at 10:29 AM



“ *Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.* ”



December 15, 2020 at 07:24 AM



“ *Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 14, 2020 at 09:29 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 14, 2020 at 03:12 PM



“ *The Hancocks and The Wallers purchased the Beautiful Rose Basket for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



The Hancocks and The Wallers - December 14, 2020 at 02:46 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 14, 2020 at 01:20 PM

CG

“ Craig M Gaddy purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



Craig M Gaddy - December 14, 2020 at 12:02 PM

GD

“ Gail & John Drzewiecki purchased the With Distinction for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



Gail & John Drzewiecki - December 14, 2020 at 10:05 AM

DL

“ Janice just told me Joann.....I'm so sorry for your loss. You will be in my prays. Love Donna Lombardo from your Maxwell family.



Donna Lombardo - December 14, 2020 at 09:54 AM

EL

“ Eric and Meghan Miller and Linked.Exchange purchased the Gracious Lavender Basket for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



Eric and Meghan Miller and Linked.Exchange - December 14, 2020 at 08:49 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket* was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



December 14, 2020 at 08:40 AM



“ *Brian Little (Group Health Wellness)* purchased the *Beautiful in Blue* for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



Brian Little (Group Health Wellness) - December 14, 2020 at 08:38 AM



“ *Large Basket Garden* was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



December 13, 2020 at 10:25 PM

BS

“ I had Triple Crown dinner with Ron in 2007. I was later seated at breakfast at a DCAP meeting with Ron in 2008. He remembered me and was so complimentary of my accomplishments thus far and asked me about my goals. I told him about President’s club, but I told him that I didn’t ever see it happening. He gave me an inspirational message that resonated with me. He offered me an opportunity to be an RSC under his leadership when he ran VA West. I had other goals at the time. I ran into him again a few years ago and he came up to let me know how proud he was of me. A 5 time President’s club member. After all the time that had passed, and some obstacles he had been through, he remembered my goals and it inspired me even more that he took notice. Thank you for being a shining light Ron. People may not always remember exactly what you said, but they will always remember how you made them feel. Fly high Sir.

Becky Smith - December 13, 2020 at 09:33 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



December 13, 2020 at 11:48 AM



“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



December 12, 2020 at 05:49 PM

LF

“ Love The Chalkley family purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



Love The Chalkley family - December 12, 2020 at 05:43 PM



“ Sweet Sincerity was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



December 12, 2020 at 01:21 PM



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



December 12, 2020 at 11:09 AM



“ Enduring Grace was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



December 12, 2020 at 09:09 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 12, 2020 at 08:59 AM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 12, 2020 at 08:29 AM



“ *Josh and Colleen,
Please accept my deepest condolences and prayers for your family's loss. May you find peace in knowing that he touched many lives and was loved by all. God Bless.*

Raj Sekhawat - December 11, 2020 at 08:43 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 11, 2020 at 06:45 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 11, 2020 at 04:18 PM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 11, 2020 at 04:08 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 11, 2020 at 03:38 PM



“ *A New Sunrise Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 11, 2020 at 02:45 PM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 11, 2020 at 02:06 PM



“ *Cheryl Lowry lit a candle in memory of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland*



Cheryl Lowry - December 11, 2020 at 01:45 PM



“ *Annie & Andy Glaub & the Aflac Nation purchased the Graceful Wreath for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



Annie & Andy Glaub & the Aflac Nation - December 11, 2020 at 12:25 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 11, 2020 at 12:05 PM



“ *Bright and Beautiful Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 11, 2020 at 11:38 AM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 11, 2020 at 10:44 AM



“ *Kim Taliaferro, Ricky & Lisa Cox, Derrick & Erin Cox & family, Zak & Chelsea Fletcher purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



Kim Taliaferro, Ricky & Lisa Cox, Derrick & Erin Cox & family, Zak & Chelsea Fletcher - December 11, 2020 at 10:40 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 11, 2020 at 10:19 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 11, 2020 at 09:00 AM



“ *Ron (Big Ronnie) as we used to call him was my cousin. Jo Ann, his rock. Two of the best and most loving people anyone could ever have in their lives. My love and prayers will continue for Jo Ann and the Kirkland family. No doubt, your faith and strength will continue. I love you.*

Lori Robinson - December 11, 2020 at 04:37 AM



“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



CHRIS CHAVIERS - December 10, 2020 at 11:01 PM

CC

“ Ron will always be remembered as a truly great person...To of known Ron was to love him. He left his mark on my life years ago as a child when he prayed over me in The AFLAC business office in Columbus Ga, as I was out of control and Ron insisted prayer was the Answer. He was right because today it's touched my life and I've seen how effective Ron has always been as a true man of God as we all have always been a close part of Ron & Family I know this is a tuff time right now. Many people are at a loss for words right now as am I also. Joann, Josh, Ron Jr, and everyone else our hearts go out to you all. I know my Father is a man of few words but he is also saddened as he has lost his long time best friend we all love you all and will some day see you again RON. Fly high & suffer no more.

CHRIS CHAVIERS - December 10, 2020 at 10:37 PM

DD

“ He was an INCREDIBLE leader a legendary influencer, RK will walk by you with a huge smile , he treated others with respect And most of all his incredible sense of humor was contagious he will forever live in the memories of our great Aflac family



Damaris Davila - December 10, 2020 at 09:43 PM



“ Serenity Wreath was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



December 10, 2020 at 08:17 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 10, 2020 at 06:36 PM



“ *I always thought Ron was an exceptional person, so loving and caring. Always doing good for his Mother and her sisters. Loved to see him when he would come to see my Mother , such a sweet person. Praying for the Kirkland family during this time.*

June Lloyd - December 10, 2020 at 05:48 PM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 10, 2020 at 05:37 PM



“ *Rhonda Jacobson lit a candle in memory of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland*



Rhonda Jacobson - December 10, 2020 at 04:49 PM



“ *Majestic Heart was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 10, 2020 at 04:34 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 10, 2020 at 04:29 PM



“ *Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 10, 2020 at 04:02 PM



Bruce Hohler

“ *Never forget when we were District Managers with Aflac in the early days. RK and I shared a room. I came in and he was sitting on the bed reading a book with that big mustache but no hair. I said where'd your hair go. His reply "it's been gone a long time" 😂. Great guy RIP my friend*

Bruce Hohler - December 10, 2020 at 03:38 PM



“ *Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



December 10, 2020 at 03:35 PM



“ *God Bless You, Marsha Hughes purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.*



God Bless You, Marsha Hughes - December 10, 2020 at 03:35 PM



“ *Jo Ann and Kirkland Family, John and I want to send you our deepest thoughts and prayers for comfort and peace during this difficult time!! He will be missed by so many people. I can remember when John and I moved here to Alabama from Colorado Ron welcomed us with a big hug and a friendly smile!! He was known for that I feel! Take care and I look forward to seeing you again. Blessings to you! John and Rhonda Jacobson*

Rhonda Jacobson - December 10, 2020 at 03:19 PM



“ *Mike Tomlinson lit a candle in memory of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland*



Mike Tomlinson - December 10, 2020 at 03:13 PM

MT

“ Jo Ann & Family -

Michelle and I were so sad to hear of RK's passing, and yet we rejoice in the thought of him entering his eternal home in heaven. We pray that our God of comfort be extra near to each of you in these coming days and months.

I have so many fond memories of my time with RK including Duane's pheasant hunts, Quinn's SSC meetings, RK coming to speak with my Dakota team and so many more. The things that I will always remember about my friend was his warm smile and eternally positive attitude. What a mentor he was!

I will also be ever grateful for the chance RK took on me when he made me an officer with Aflac (VP Terr. Dir.) in 2008.

Heaven has gained a faithful servant and fun-loving, optimistic leader!

*Mike & Michelle Tomlinson
Watertown, SD*

Mike Tomlinson - December 10, 2020 at 03:12 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.



December 10, 2020 at 02:59 PM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Ronald Edward Kirkland.* ”



December 10, 2020 at 01:52 PM