



Mr. Howard Benjamin Jones Sr.

September 3, 1930 - March 23, 2020

Howard "Howdy" Benjamin Jones, Sr., 89, of Lakeland, Florida, entered into eternal rest on March 23, 2020, surrounded by his wife and family. He was born on September 3, 1930, in Endicott, New York, and was raised on a farm in Warren Center, Pennsylvania. He was predeceased by parents, Morgan and Helen, brothers, Douglas and Morgan Jr., and sisters, Roena and Mary Lou. He and his wife, Bettie Mai, raised their family in Warren Center and then Apalachin, New York. He was a veteran of the United States Army, based in Ft. Campbell, where he met Bettie. He owned and operated Howdy Jones Excavating, Jones and Mead Construction, Howdy Jones Construction, and Howdy Jones Used Equipment. He was a member of the Westbrook Masonic Lodge #333, the International Flying Farmers, and various antique car clubs. He had an affinity for all things fast--flying his airplanes and helicopters, racing stock cars, and riding and racing snowmobiles. He found great pleasure in visiting with friends, longtime employees, and people of the community. He loved his family dearly and left them with a love of accomplishment and self-worth. He is survived by his wife, Bettie, of 63 years; children, Paula Druen (Dan) of Gallatin, Tennessee, Howdy Jones, Jr. (Tara) of Lakeland, Florida, Nancy Rabenold (Gary) of Brandon, Florida, and Tracy Greenwood (Mark) of Nashville, Tennessee; grandchildren, Angela Vitale Kidd (David), Michele Vitale House (Joseph), Ben Vitale (Bobbi Jayne), Ellory, Audra, Raquel "Boo Boo", and Howdy III Jones, Gary Jr. and Evan Rabenold, and Ryan Salts (Katie); great-grandchildren, Zachary, Landon, William, Adeline, Maverick,

Jett, Jacob, Jaxon, and Joslyn; and brother-in-law, sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews, family, and friends. His humor and love of living will be missed. Memorial services will be held at later dates.

Tribute Wall

JW

“ Howdy Jones made a difference in my families life. Whether it was watching us play basketball Saturday mornings as kids, the air strip, Jones Softball field, loaning my family equipment several times, recommending my name for work....add to that a couple crazy memories I will never forget the last visit I had with him and Betty. Thank you Howdy.

jim Walter - March 25, 2020 at 01:08 PM

PD

I remember talking to you right after you were there. Believe me, there are a lot more dents in the doors. Thank you for stopping to see them. They throughly enjoyed your visit.

Paula Druen - March 25, 2020 at 02:57 PM

MS

I'll miss seeing you every morning. You have always been a kind man. You are at peace now in the arms of our Lord and Savior. Thank you for the laughs. Rest in peace, Howdy.

Michelle Shirah - March 31, 2020 at 05:51 PM

SB

“ So very sorry for your loss. Howdy was such a wonderful man, My Thoughts and Prayers are with you all
Susan Brown

susan brown - March 25, 2020 at 10:47 AM

GG

“ I went to school with Howdy’s children, Nancy and I were in the same grade. I went to their home a few times when Nancy and I were working on schoolwork together. Howdy treated me like one of the family while I was there and made me laugh, and I spent countless evenings at the ball park that Howdy created which allowed so much fun for the whole neighborhood. My sincere condolences to Howdy’s family and friends. May you find peace through the coming days.

Gail Gilchrist - March 25, 2020 at 09:04 AM

AR

“ I am so sorry to read of Howdy's passing. My sincere condolences to the family.

Art Rider

Art Rider - March 25, 2020 at 12:05 AM

JW

“ We are sad to hear of Howdy's passing. We have some good memories of living near the Jones. Also spent many hours at the ball field. Will never forget when Kenny was kicked out of the park and while he was standing out by the road, Howdy came out and told him "this is my ball park, and you don't have to stand out here". Howdy Jones Construction did our excavating when we built on Gaylord Rd. We will pray for comfort in your loss. Kenny and Joanne Williams

Joanne Williams - March 24, 2020 at 11:44 PM

RD

“ I was learning to backup using mirrors without adult supervision. I backed my mom’s car into my dad’s (Stan Tyrrell) company pick up truck. Well I had to call Howdy and tell him what I did. This was not an easy task for an embarrassed, scared, and poor 15 year old. Howdy was very gracious and calm. He quickly predicted the future by saying, “this won’t be the last time you jam a vehicle.” He was right! By-the-by, I was allowed to make payments to repair the vehicle. A life lesson I have truly appreciated thru the years. Fair winds and following seas Howdy!

Ric Darling - March 24, 2020 at 11:36 PM

JM

“ Jeannine Miller lit a candle in memory of Mr. Howard Benjamin Jones Sr.



Jeannine Miller - March 24, 2020 at 09:13 PM

JF

“ We are very sad to hear of Howdy’s passing. Howdy and his family were a great part of Apalachin history. Prayers and condolences to family. Al & Jo Ann Fargnoli

Jo Ann Fargnoli - March 24, 2020 at 08:53 PM

FF

“ Played many softball games on Howdy Jones’ ball field ... RIP Mr Jones, Thoughts and prayers with your family

Ford and Flaherty Family - March 24, 2020 at 08:52 PM

LB

“ I have so many fun loving memories of our time together. Playing cards, going to church, going out to eat. Howdy and Bette include us with their family on holidays . Thanks for the memories , Howdy. Thoughts and Prayers with Bette and family. Love to all, Lucy Bentley

Lucille Bentley - March 24, 2020 at 08:49 PM

KO

“ Kathy Ostrander lit a candle in memory of Mr. Howard Benjamin Jones Sr.



Kathy Ostrander - March 24, 2020 at 08:25 PM

KO

Genevieve and Cecil R. Jackson from Newark Valley, New York were my grandparents. I know Howdy was a distant cousin of mine through Grandma or Grandpa. I would like to extend my condolences to the family. I remember when Grandma had a yard sale at my Mom's and my home - Howdy came and bought some of Mom and Aunt Alice's old school books that Grandma had kept. That was when she was moving from the farmhouse down to Aunt Alice and Uncle Dana's house into an apartment they had built on. So many memories. Cling to your memories. They are more important than any material items.

Kathy Ostrander - March 24, 2020 at 08:33 PM

RB

On behalf of the Brown family (Dolores, Roger, Cindy and Kyle), we are saddened to hear about Howdy's passing. He was always upbeat and full of life. I took my mother and father to see Howdy and Bettie in Lakeland about 6 years ago and had a great visit. My father and Howdy were cousins and would talk for hours about working on the farm in Warren Center. I remember the many years of the Jones reunions and one in particular that came with a helicopter ride. Some of the reunions were held at IBM park in Owego. Howdy had many stories that were captivating. He was a great man with a great wife and great family. He will be missed. My deepest sympathy to Howdy's family.

Roger Brown - March 24, 2020 at 08:51 PM

BB

“ I'm so sorry to hear of Howdy's passing. I remember when I was in my early twenties and I called him up to ask if he would spend fifteen minutes with me to explain what he thought was required to be a successful business man. He invited me over to his home and talked with me for quite a while about his personal story of becoming successful. He made an impression on me that I've carried ever since that evening. Many times I've thought how lucky we were that he built the softball field for all of us who were lucky enough to play in the league there. My prayers go out to all of his family.

Bob Bystricky - March 24, 2020 at 08:14 PM

KB

“ My father always liked gab sessions with Howdy. I'll never forget Dad telling me to get out of the yard and off the mower. When I asked him why he said "Because that helicopter is Howdy and he's landing where you're mowing ! Best wishes for the entire family at this time. A man that can not be replaced. God Speed

Keith Bonin - March 24, 2020 at 05:14 PM

TC

In my opinion, his greatest accomplishment in life was blessing us with his beautiful daughter, Paula Jones Druen. Sending blessings and love to all the family.

Trish Chandler - March 24, 2020 at 06:24 PM

JH

*Sorry to hear this sad news! Was such a wonderful neighbor when he lived in Apalachin! Howdy brought so much good to this small community! Our thoughts and prayers are with the Jones family💕
Jeff & Karen Hellmann*

Jeff & Karen Hellmann - March 24, 2020 at 09:42 PM

KS

“ *My late husband (Don Spencer) started his construction career with Howdy. Don only had the best to say about Howdy and how much he taught Don. RIP Howdy. My prayers, thoughts and hugs go out to his family.*

Kay Spencer - March 24, 2020 at 04:59 PM

MS

“ *Howdy and his crew dug most of the foundations for my parents' houses and I remember going out to his house when he still lived out near Warren Ctr. I believe my Dad also briefly worked for him. He was a great guy with a wonderful personality! I'm sure you and Dad are having a great visit up there in heaven once again. My sympathy to his family!*

Mary Ann Hogan Sacharov



Mary Ann Sacharov - March 24, 2020 at 04:02 PM

JB

Sorry for your loss. He was a inspiration to our community Jim Barry

Jim Barry - March 24, 2020 at 07:47 PM

SR

“ So sorry for your loss. Howdy called Randy several times after his dad passed away. We will keep you all in our prayers. Rand & Sharon Rockefeller.

sharon rockefeller - March 24, 2020 at 03:43 PM

M(

“ Sorry for your loss. Howdy took my son and I for a ride in his airplane. He made a little boy very happy. May you rest in peace Howdy

Marty brazeal (NICHOLS) - March 24, 2020 at 02:34 PM

MJ

“ I joined the Jones family 50 years ago in Aug when I married his nephew Doug Jr. I have too many memories to share here but I will always see his smile and hear his laugh as he shared stories that made me roar with laughter ❤️ His generous spirit touched so many and our son Jason was one of those people who got to know him and love him too ❤️ RIP Uncle Howdy, “good and faithful servant “ 🙏💔😭

Mimi Jones - March 24, 2020 at 01:47 PM

RB

“ I remember Ucle Howdy (my great uncle) taking us on a ride in a helicopter. That was really thrilling to me! So sorry to hear of his passing. Much love to you from England.
Robin (Depew) Brown (Linda Depew is my mom and Mary Lou my grandma)

Robin Brown - March 24, 2020 at 12:48 PM

RD

“ When I was young, Howdy had an airplane he would sometimes fly low over the Center. I was allowed to run out into the yard (not near the road) and wave to Howdy. The result was that I assumed EVERY airplane was flown by “HowdyJones” and I would wave and shout at all of them.

Driving by his heavy equipment, I would press my nose to the window and name the machines, all lined up inside a fence. I reached a conclusion that Howdy Jones was in charge of ALL the digging equipment. One day, Uncle Emerson had me sit on his lap and learn how to control the backhoe. I was shaking with excitement afterwards, and my Mom said, “Wasn’t it nice of Uncle Emerson to let you dig a hole?” I nodded vigorously and quietly said, “and it’s nice that Howdy let’s him use it.” :)

-Randy Dewing

Randy Dewing - March 24, 2020 at 12:19 PM

SR

“ Like you all, Benny and I are saddened by the passing of Howdy Sr. We were very fortunate to have known him and have so many wonderful memories of our times together. He was always so generous and full of "the Dickens"! We will never forget all the Easter's we had at their beautiful home in Lakeland. Both him and your Mom always made us feel a close part of the family. We will miss him dearly, but will always have these fabulous memories to cherish. Many lives were blessed by having Howdy in it! Quite a legacy indeed! 🌈🙏💕

Susan Rabenold-Swanson - March 24, 2020 at 10:34 AM

JY

“ Doug always had fond memories of his “Uncle Howdy! As a teenager, it was great to have such a cool uncle! He told Doug one Saturday to take the backhoe and dig ditches around the garage in a Warren Center and thus became his career with Uncle Howdy! Thanks to your dad and mother, we had a very good life and Doug found the job of his dreams! There are many beautiful ponds and lakes around the area thanks to Howdy Jones Construction Company and the great group of guys he employed! He ran a tight ship! His practical jokes and laughter will never be forgotten! Love to all you. ❤️🙏

Janice Young - March 24, 2020 at 09:29 AM