



## Mr. Ralph E. Shope

May 9, 1934 - November 16, 2016

Ralph E. "Gene" Shope, 82, of Plant City, Florida, born on May 9, 1934 in Vonore, Tennessee, entered into eternal rest on November 16, 2016. He was a retired Master Sergeant with the United States Air Force and Vice President of Installment Loans with the First Florida Bank in Plant City, and was a team member at Pasco Motors, Bell Chevrolet and Hopewell Funeral Home and Memorial Gardens in Plant City. He lived his life for his God, Family, and Country. He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Lynn Shope; daughters, Sherry Baldwin (Tom) and Tammy Harrington (Steve); grandchildren, Melissa "Missy" Connell (Mike), and Alexandria, Madison, and Olivia Harrington; great-grandchildren, McKenzie Griffin, and Shawn, Maddox, and Murphy Connell; siblings, Doyle Shope (Mary) and Nina Lee; and many loving nieces, nephews, family, and friends. He was preceded in death by his daughter, Melinda Shope; and grandson, Patrick Harrington. A Celebration of Life will be held on Monday, November 21 at 11:00 A.M. at Hopewell Funeral Home, 6005 CR 39 S, Plant City, where the family will receive friends beginning at 10:00 A.M. Committal with military honors to follow at Florida National Cemetery, Bushnell. Memorial contributions may be made to the United Food Bank of Plant City, 702 E. Alsobrook St #H, Plant City, FL 33563. Expressions of condolence at [www.HopewellFuneral.com](http://www.HopewellFuneral.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Florida National Cemetery

Bushnell, FL

# Previous Events

## Visitation

NOV 21. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Hopewell Funeral Home  
6005 County Road 39 South  
Plant City, FL 33567  
(813) 737-3128  
office@hopewellfuneral.com  
<http://www.hopewellfuneral.com>

## Celebration of Life

NOV 21. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Hopewell Funeral Home  
6005 County Road 39 South  
Plant City, FL 33567  
(813) 737-3128  
office@hopewellfuneral.com  
<http://www.hopewellfuneral.com>

## Graveside

NOV **21**. 2:30 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Florida National Cemetery  
Bushnell, FL

# Tribute Wall



“ *Hopewell Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. Ralph E. Shope*



---

**Hopewell Funeral Home** - November 19, 2016 at 04:20 PM

SB

“ *1 file added to the album Life Tributes*



---

**S Baldwin** - October 15, 2017 at 10:47 PM

FR

“ *Ralph was one of nicest and kindest men any one would want meet .I will truly miss him he was truly a beacon in the plant city area .I was very proud to know him ,and will truly miss him ,Franklin Oneal Ringgold Ga*

---

**franklin.oneal** - December 29, 2016 at 08:37 AM

Brenda  
Kay

“ I was deeply saddened to hear of Ralph's passing. I knew him from working at First National/First Florida Bank. He was always smiling and always positive regardless of the circumstances of the day. I'm sure heaven welcomed him with a loud and joyous song.

*Brenda Paul*

---

**Brenda Kay** - November 26, 2016 at 09:23 PM

SE

“ I was so sorry to hear about Ralph. He was the kindest and sweetest man. I met him at the Y and enjoyed our talks very much. My heart goes out to Lynn and his family. You all are in my thoughts and prayers.

*Sherlyn Eukovich*

---

**Sherlyn Eukovich** - November 21, 2016 at 04:16 PM

RD

“ The Lord was in need of another good man and God called to Ralph. Ralph sold me my first car, 1976 Mercury Comet. If ever the term " Good Man" fit someone, it is Ralph Shope. You will me missed old friend.



---

**Robert David Dixon** - November 21, 2016 at 07:27 AM

LD

“ So absolutely heartbroken to hear that Mr. Ralph passed away. What an amazing loving man. Missy, Mike & all the boys and family, you're in our thoughts and prayers. All our love, Dustin, Layla & the boys.



---

**Layla Drawdy** - November 21, 2016 at 06:46 AM

VN

“ *Mr. Shope sold me my very first new truck back in 1977. We were friends then and continued to be . Always a bright smile, a firm handshake and you knew his word was his bond. A fine man who loved his Lord and his family. My condolences to his beautiful family.*

---

**Vernon " Governor" Niswanger** - November 20, 2016 at 09:56 AM

MS

“ *Sorry to hear about the death of my friend Ralph Shope . I have known him for some 50 years from way back in his years at FNBank. The last 20 years I have worked with Ralph on the Plant City Safety Employee's Pension Plan where for several years he served as Chairman of Board of Trustees. Retiring a few years ago but under his leadership the Plan rose to almost 40 million dollars strong. The Plant City Policeman & Firemen are very grateful to his years of hard work and dedication on their behalf. The City of Plant City has recognized him several times for years of service to our community. I'm very proud to call Ralph a true friend and he will be truly miss. Diane and I remember Ralph the days we worshipped together in our church FBC with Ralph. May my friend Rest In Peace and may God be with his family during this time.*

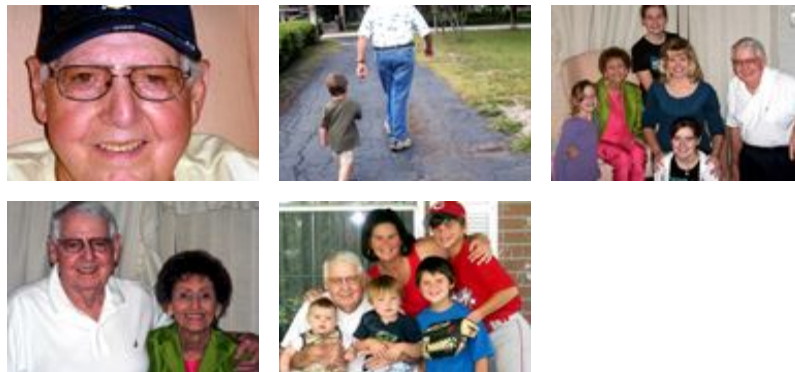
*Commissioner Michael S. Sparkman  
City of Plant City, Florida*

---

**Mike Sparkman** - November 19, 2016 at 08:49 PM



“ 51 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



**Hopewell Funeral Home** - November 19, 2016 at 04:17 PM



“ *Eddie and Jeff Shope and families. purchased the Lily and Rose Tribute Spray for the family of Mr. Ralph E. Shope.*



**Eddie and Jeff Shope and families.** - November 19, 2016 at 08:57 AM



“ *Cheryl Wiggins Denney lit a candle in memory of Mr. Ralph E. Shope*



**Cheryl Wiggins Denney** - November 19, 2016 at 08:25 AM

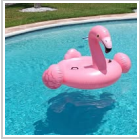
KW

“ Keith and Janice Westbrook purchased the Sweet Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Mr. Ralph E. Shope.



---

**Keith and Janice Westbrook** - November 18, 2016 at 08:51 PM



“ Uncle Ralph is what I called him. We worked together at First Florida in PC. What a great man. You will be missed. May God be with your family. Lorri Colding Leonard.

---

**Lorri Leonard** - November 18, 2016 at 07:27 PM

BN

“ I REMEMBER RALPH VERY WELL . WE WERE STATIONED TOGETHER AT GRIFFISS AFB, ROME NEW YORK IN THE LATE 50s, EARLY 60s. I WAS RALPHS SUPERVISOR FOR SEVERAL YEARS. I ALWAYS KNEW HIM TO BE A NATURAL LEADER, HONEST, TRUSTWORTHY AND FAIR TO HIS MEN. I RETIRED TO CLEARWATER FL IN 1978 AND HEARD THAT RALPH WAS AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE AND ONE DAY I HAPPENED TO MEET HIM AT MACDILL AFB IN TAMPA. WE TALKED BRIEFLY AND PROMISED TO GET TOGETHER AT A LATER DATE, UNFORTUNATLY NEITHER ONE OF US FOLLOWED UP. RALPH WAS ALWAYS IN THE BACK OF MY MIND AND USUALLY WHEN OLD MILITARY BUDDYS MEET WE ALWAYS ASK " WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO SO AND SO " INVARIABLY RALPHS NAME WOULD COME UP. I REGRET NOW THAT I DID NOT FOLLOWUP WITH RALPH WAY BACK WHEN. REST IN PEACE , MY FRIEND. YOUR TOUR IS OVER. YOU NOW HAVE A NEW ASSIGNMENT. YOUR FRIEND. CMSGT BOB NAJA. USAF, RET.

---

**BOB NAJA** - November 18, 2016 at 09:00 AM

CM

*“ Ralph was one of the kindest men I've known. I first met Ralph about 40 years ago when he was working at the bank. He approved my first car loan. He was an awesome person and people like him are very rare. My sympathy goes out to his family during this time of loss. He will be forever remembered and greatly missed.*



---

**Charlotte Mathews** - November 18, 2016 at 07:17 AM

SH

*“ Mr. Shope was a one in a million. My family has known him for years. I can never remember a moment when he didn't stop and hug me and ask how everyone was doing. He will be missed in this town. Prayers to the family.  
Sheila Wiggins*

---

**sheila** - November 18, 2016 at 06:24 AM



*“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Ralph E. Shope.*



---

November 17, 2016 at 09:14 PM

DH

*“ I will never forget that warm beautiful smile that was always there to greet you when we would run into each other. Will miss him deeply.*

---

**Debbie Harrell** - November 17, 2016 at 08:31 PM

WM

“ I know Ralph is well received in Heaven and is making a place for you and me. I enjoyed him at the FNB and with the different services he provided for others. I have to work and can't attend by wish the family the very best and long live the memories we have.

---

**William Meriwether** - November 17, 2016 at 06:47 PM

NK

“ So sorry to hear of Gene's passing. seems I have personally known him forever because I heard my sister talk about him and especially of his wife so long . she really liked both of them. I am Ann's sister and had the previlage of visiting his home one year when we camped there. Prayers for the Shope family. Nadene Kyle

---

**Nadene Kyle** - November 17, 2016 at 06:45 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mr. Ralph E. Shope.



---

November 17, 2016 at 06:04 PM