



James M. Wood, Jr.

November 7, 1926 - April 18, 2018

James M. Wood, Jr. (Nov. 7, 1926 - April 18, 2018) The world has lost a great leader, community advocate, entrepreneur, lay minister, philanthropist, and mentor, with the passing of James M. Wood, Jr. He was 91. When Jim Wood was deciding on a career path, he said he either wanted to be a preacher or a newspaper publisher. He chose the latter, he says because he thought he could minister to more people more effectively from the editorial pages and personal column in the paper than he could in the pulpit. Family, friends, and colleagues have described Jim Wood as a "pillar of the community," and a "man of great strength and integrity." A former employee noted, "Jim Wood had the purest agenda of anyone I ever worked with." Jim Wood was born in Dade City, Florida, but was raised in the mill town of Lanett, Alabama during the Great Depression. He graduated from Lanett High School and received his Bachelor's Degree in Journalism from the University of Alabama, class of 1948. While a student in the ROTC at Alabama, he was drafted into the U.S. Army, where he served in the Army of Occupation in Germany during World War II, following a near death experience with spinal meningitis. Jim Wood began his professional career in journalism in 1948, as a general assignment reporter for the Chattahoochee Valley Times and West Point News. Over his career, he worked as a news reporter, trade industry reporter, feature writer, medical science writer, editor and publisher. In 1963, Wood ventured into the world of publishing when he purchased the Fayette County News out of bankruptcy, and published it alongside the Clayton County Journal. Less than

a decade later, in 1971, he was recruited by local investors in Clayton County to establish a daily newspaper for the community, which he did with the founding of the News Daily in Jonesboro, GA. From there, he also founded ATL, the Atlanta airport newspaper, which he owned and operated for more than 30 years, along with DFW People, the airport newspaper in Dallas/Fort Worth, which he acquired in 1983. That same year, he also established Jim Wood & Associates (JWA), a public relations agency, which continues to operate today. While also working professionally in the newspaper business, Jim Wood has been active in politics and public service. He was a member of the Georgia House of Representatives from 1976 to 1982, and was a charter member of the Board of Trustees of Clayton State University. His peers elected him President of the Georgia Press Association (GPA) in 1977, and through the years, the GPA honored him with awards for general excellence in community journalism in various categories on several occasions. His last honor from the Georgia Press Association was his induction into the industry's "Gold" society of newspaper professionals with 50 or more years of experience. Wood was a lifelong Methodist, whose faith was manifested in a number of roles that included Lay Leader, Sunday School Teacher, Administrative Board Member, and more. He was married to Martha Maxwell Wood for 58 years, until her death (on the same day of his passing six years earlier) on April 18, 2012. Jim and Martha Wood popularized the Tomato Sandwich Party, which first served as a political fundraiser for his campaigns for public office. Since that first "Rally" in 1976, the Tomato Sandwich Party has gone on to serve as a fundraiser for both the Mental Health Association and the Good Shepherd Clinic in Morrow, GA. Jim Wood is survived by his four sons and their families: Jim (Ruthie), and their sons Matthew (Brittany) and Mark (Mary Kathleen); Max (Suzanne), and their son Frank (Laura), daughter Sydney and son Jamey; Farrar (Mona), and their son Christopher (Shannon); and Chris (Lisa), and Lisa's son Tyler, as well as three great grandchildren, including Elliott and Amy (Mark and MK's) and James Matthew Wood V (Matt and Brittany's). Visitation is being hosted by Ford-Stewart

Funeral Home in Jonesboro, GA this Saturday April 21, from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. A funeral service to celebrate his life and faith will be held on Sunday April 22, at 2:00 p.m. at Jones Memorial United Methodist Church in Lake City, GA. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations in his memory to Jones Memorial United Methodist Church in Lake City, or Clayton State University, where the family has two established endowments in the name of Jim and Martha Wood. Ford-Stewart Funeral Home, Inc., Jonesboro/Stockbridge 77-210-2700. www.fordstewartfuneralhome.com