



Ray Lewis Guenther

December 31, 1942 - April 8, 2021

Mr. Raymond Lewis Guenther, lifetime resident of Altoona, Florida, died on April 8, 2021, from complications of a stroke. He was 78 years old.

Known as the "Ambassador of Ravenswood Road," Ray would often be seen ambling down the street in his golf cart sharing the bounty of his garden with neighbors and friends. He was considered one of the early adopters of peach farming in Lake County, inspiring several local growers in the area to consider peach farming as an alternative to citrus. Before his passing he had also started to plant apples, plums, and persimmons trees, unheard of in Florida a decade ago. In his spare time, Ray read voraciously two to three books a week and was in a book club with his lifelong childhood friends.

Ray Guenther was born in Eustis, Florida, on December 31, 1942 to Paul and Nina Guenther. Ray, an award-winning football fullback, graduated from Umatilla High School in 1961. He graduated from Central Florida Junior College in 1965.

As citrus was in his blood, after college with a brief stint in Bradenton, he returned to Umatilla as foreman of the packing house for the Umatilla Citrus Growers Association. Ray remembered visiting the packing house as a little boy with his grandfather, Carl Guenther, a charter member of the cooperative. He continued his career with the Florida Agriculture Marketing Association,

Florida Farm Bureau for 30 years. Although Ray retired, he always returned to help the Farm Bureau with Christmas deliveries. Finally, in 2015 he completely retired to work on his small fruit farm and his wife's greenhouse business, Ravenswood Gardens.

Mr. Guenther is survived by his wife, Jacalyn Parramore Guenther; his son, Robert Lewis Guenther and his wife, Martha Scott Poindexter Guenther, of Alexandria, Virginia. He had three grandchildren, Joel (Hannah) Guenther, and three great grandchildren, Christian, Jonah and Arlo, of Charleston, SC; Daria Guenther, Newport, Rhode Island, and George Guenther, Melbourne, Florida.

In lieu of customary remembrances, the family requests with gratitude that memorial contributions in Ray Guenther's name be directed to the donor's choice of the Umatilla Public Library (directed to Mrs. Janet Price, 412 Hatfield Drive, Umatilla, FL 32784) or Paisley Public Library (directed to Mr. Jonathan Dolce, 24954 County Road 42, Paisley, FL 32767). A celebration of his life will be held for family and friends at a later date.

Tribute Wall

CB

“ *My condolences to Jackie, Robert and the entire family. I considered Ray a good friend and he will be missed.*

Charles H. Babb - April 23, 2021 at 03:38 PM

DB

“ *I have such sweet memories of Jackie and Ray at Lake Feed & Farm. Jackie may God hold you close and give you peace in your heart. Praying for you, Robert and all the family. Love Debbie Buzard*

Debbie Buzard - April 22, 2021 at 10:02 PM

AD

“ *Ray was also a teacher in his own way.he showed me how to load trucks at farm bureau while on the weekends we would build greenhouse.he will be missed but forever loved*

Amanda D Devore - April 15, 2021 at 05:55 PM

MN

“ *Just learned of Ray's passing. So so sorry to hear. I will miss seeing him on my walks. Such a nice and generous man. Always friendly! Prayers for his family.*

Marilee Nall - April 13, 2021 at 11:24 AM