



Wendell Harvey Colson Sr

August 17, 1930 - May 14, 2023

Wendell Harvey Colson, Sr., 92, passed away peacefully on Sunday, May 14, 2023.

He was born on August 17, 1930, in Lake City, Florida, the youngest child of Leonard F. Colson, Sr and Eula Fay Harvey Colson. He is preceded in death by his parents, a brother, two sisters, and will now join his loving wife of 74 years, Mary, who just recently went to Heaven on January 3, 2023.

Wendell is survived by his four sons, Wendell Jr. (Hazel), Mark (Tina), Philip, and Douglas (Suzanne); eight grandchildren, Wendell III (Trey), Christian, Nathan, Brett, Tyler, Blair, Jake, Jessica and eleven great-grandchildren. He loved them all and their spouses.

As a young boy, he delivered papers on his bicycle for the Jacksonville Journal and was a peanut vendor for Hurst-Hole-in the Wall. During his later teen years, he worked part-time for A&P and Chapple's Grocery stores.

Wendell attended his local public schools in Lake City, graduating with honors from Columbia High School. He was Class President of his freshman, sophomore, and senior classes and Vice-President of his junior class. He participated in many extra-curricular activities and was a Varsity letterman on football, basketball (member of '47 State Championship team), baseball and

track teams.

Wendell first attended Harvard University out of high school and married his high school sweetheart, Mary (Brown), before leaving for Cambridge. While at Harvard, he held part time jobs as a dog walker, babysitter for professor's children, and was hired by Mass General Hospital in Boston to work several hours, five nights a week, delivering IV supplies and equipment to various departments. He would then transfer to The University of Florida, in Gainesville, Florida, where he graduated with honors from the College of Business at The University of Florida and was a member of the Beta Gamma Sigma honorary business fraternity. He worked almost full-time during his college years as an office assistant for UF's Department of Grounds and Police. It was also during this time that they would start a family, having the first of their four sons.

After college, Wendell began a 43-year banking career by becoming the first "Management Trainee" in The First National Bank of Orlando. Several successful years there prepared him to fulfill a desire to run a bank and, for ten years thereafter, he was an officer in young or start-up banks as a VP National Bank of Sarasota, President/CEO Harbour City National Bank of Eau Gallie, President/CEO First National Bank of Satellite Beach, President/CEO First National Bank of Lakeland. He then returned to his Orlando bank, then First of Orlando Corporation, a holding company for four other affiliated banks in greater Orlando. A few months later that bank acquired its first bank outside of Orlando, First National Bank of Leesburg, and he was sent there to become its President/CEO.

Valuable experience gained in this assignment earned him a progression of promotion to Chairman of a Region of banks in a territory from Jacksonville to Sebring. He was then called back to Orlando in 1981 to become EVP for Retail, Mortgage and Trust banking for Sun Banks of Florida (successor to

First at Orlando Corp). This tenure led him to participate in many bank acquisitions throughout Florida, including other bank holding companies, i.e., Flagship Banks, banking companies in Broward, Dade, and Palm Beach counties. In 1985 Sun Banks merged with First Company of Georgia to become SunTrust Banks where he held several management positions until his retirement in 1995 as Chairman, President/CEO of SunTrust Banks of Florida.

Active in numerous civic, philanthropic and social organizations in various Florida locations, including: Past President Florida Banker Association; Trustee Florida Institute of Technology Melbourne; President/Director Florida Future Farmers Foundations; Director Leesburg Regional Hospital Foundation; Active member of several Presbyterian Churches; Rotarian; Harvard Club of Central Florida; and his most passionate job, Dog Handler and Master for his German Shepherds (Thor, Fancy, Tigger and Tess)

In addition to his exemplary career as a banker and his love for his dogs, he also had a few other passions. He absolutely loved the Florida Gators and, as a Bull Gator, went to almost every home football game and several away games until his health prohibited him from attending. He would then watch the Gators from his television and call his family afterwards to discuss the game's play-by-play. He loved sports and enjoyed attending his grandchildren's games and activities after retirement. He also loved living and being on the water, boating, and spending time with his family. He was a gracious host, always having a speech or prayer prepared and several outdoor activities planned. His personal favorite was planning and executing an annual Colson Thanksgiving Competition with prizes for the winners.

Wendell was a very faithful man, who loved the Lord, and tithed accordingly. He was a loving husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather, great-grandfather,

and will be greatly missed by us all.

Wendell's service will be held on Friday, June 16, 2023, at 2:00 in the chapel at The First Presbyterian Church of Orlando, 106 East Church Street, Orlando, Florida 32801. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in his memory to Camp Boggy Creek, 30500 Brantley Branch Road, Eustis, Florida 32736

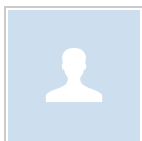
Previous Events

Service

JUN **16**. 2:00 PM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church of Orlando
106 E Church St
Orlando, FL 32801
(407) 423-3441

Tribute Wall



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Wendell Harvey Colson Sr.*



June 14, 2023 at 01:11 PM



“ *Wendell was a great man and a great boss. I still remember meeting with him for breakfast at Mission Inn as a 26 year old novice banker hoping to move from Atlanta back to Florida. Fortunately he hired me, which led to a 33 year career in Leesburg with SunBank and its successors. Wendell was a gracious, honorable man and regarded by all who knew him as the epitome of a talented, professional, dedicated and honest banker. He was so adept at making a personal connection with everyone, making everyone feel welcome and respected. Rest in Peace, Mr. Colson.*

George Madden

George Madden - May 25, 2023 at 02:13 PM



Prayers for family and friends, but I know Mary and Wendall are dancing to heaven's trumpets!

nancy montcalm - May 26, 2023 at 11:17 PM