



Mr. Gailon "Papa" Joyner Young

August 13, 1932 - November 10, 2023

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A larger-than-life presence, Gailon "Papa" Young was a multi-skilled and multi-talented man.

Raised on a farm in the years following the Great Depression, he knew how to pinch pennies and appreciate all he earned. Gailon was an honest man, sometimes brutally so, and it's often been said that if someone were to ask for his opinion, then that person better be prepared to hear it.

In 1952 Gailon joined the U. S. Navy and proudly served during the Korean War. Most of his service was spent in the Asian arena where he was a Shipfitter (Metal Smith) Petty Officer 2nd Class, serving mostly on the U. S. S. Talladega. Only in his later years did he start telling stories of fishing and swimming off the ship and almost getting court martialed for going straight to the CO of the ship about the quality of chow his men were served. As a veteran who returned to his hometown and "made good," in 2014 Gailon was awarded the Patriotism Award for Clay County on Veterans' Day. He often

regretted not making a career of the Navy, but in 1956 he was honorably discharged and came back home to West Point to his sweetheart, Maudie Henry.

Gailon and Maudie were married October 6, 1956, at Calvary Baptist Church in West Point.

Maudie was a cosmetologist, and Gailon went to work at Babcock and Wilcox where he stayed for 11 years in a supervisory role.

Their only child Marilyn was born on April 30, 1966. Shortly after, Gailon was told that all B&W employees would start working swing shifts to which he replied, "No, hell, I'm not." Much to his wife's dismay, Gailon turned in his 2-week notice. When she asked what they were going to do, he promised her he would figure it out.

And thus was born Young Plumbing Company. A firm believer in hard work and pulling oneself up by the bootstraps, Gailon successfully owned and operated his commercial and residential plumbing contracting company for almost 50 years, finally hanging up his tools for good in his early 80s. From the dozens of young men he employed through the years are tales of stopping to cool off with a swim in Tibbee Creek, cutting the day short to go fishing, and learning many work and life lessons.

Few things in life gave Gailon more pleasure than teaching young people how to hunt, fish, or golf. A true outdoorsman, he never enjoyed being inside or inactive for very long. If an animal could be hunted, hooked, or trapped, Gailon had done it. On the golf course there wasn't a club in his golf bag that he couldn't swing, but his putter was his most lethal weapon. He loved nature and always felt closest to God in the woods or on a creekbank.

An exceptional golfer until shortly before his death, he swung a golf club the way he lived his life – with all his might. Laying up and playing safe on the golf course was not in his nature. In 1957 he and Maudie became members of West Point Country Club, where he was an Honorary Member at the time of his death and had served on the board several times. Throughout his years of playing, he scored 2 holes-in-one and in his heyday was a scratch golfer. Everyone knew if Papa was on their team in a scramble, they had an advantage even when he was 90 years old.

When Marilyn entered junior high and started cheerleading and playing basketball, Gailon and Maudie never missed a game no matter how far away or late at night. The station wagon was often full of pom poms, sweaty uniforms, and as many kids as it would hold. He was his daughter's most loyal supporter, fan, and critic.

Then he became a grandfather and earned the title of "Papa." Brandi was born on November 6, 1987, and his heart only expanded. If Marilyn made him smile, then Brandi made him glow. The bond between the two of them was immeasurable. "Papa" was her first word, and she said it loud and often. When Brandi was a little girl, she could spot her Papa on the golf course from the swimming pool at WPCC. When she saw him, Brandi ran to the chain link fence and yelled, "Papa!" His name was forever changed. Just as they had many years before, he and Maudie kept the roads warm following her in basketball and softball. She found in him the same loyal supporter, and he found in her a deep and abiding devotion. Whether they were fishing, hunting, golfing, or just hanging around, those two had an unbreakable bond.

His heart only swelled further with the birth of his great-grandson, Axel Joyner Durr. Even though Axel lives out of state, Papa did his best to take advantage of every visit and every Facetime call. He called him “my boy” and told anyone who would listen how proud he was to be a great-grandfather. Axel loves to fish, so Papa’s legacy continues.

Above all, Gailon was an honest, fun man. Everyone knew that if he gave his word, then the deed was as good as done. Whether in business or in his personal life, Gailon left a lasting impression.

To meet Gailon was to remember him. He was a friend to many. With a quick smile and a big laugh, he loved a strong handshake or a monstrous hug. Always ready with a quick and witty reply, Gailon enjoyed being around people. He often made his rounds in West Point from Kellogg’s Hardware to Phillip’s Hardware to the Co-op with offerings of his homemade peanut brittle, which was legendary. Many folks gained a few extra pounds around the holidays thanks to that brittle. He loved a good, clean joke. Once when a friend of his had raised his first garden in his backyard, Gailon had a sign painted that boasted “Garden of the Month” to plant in the man’s yard. To laugh was to live.

Gailon was also a deeply spiritual man. He was ordained as a deacon in Calvary Baptist Church in 1980. It was a responsibility and an honor that he took very seriously. Even after those late-night ballgames, Gailon read his Bible before going to bed faithfully every night. One of his greatest personal accomplishments was that he had read the Bible through at least 3 times. His faith was important to him. When he entered Windsor Place in September of this year, one of the nurses asked him how he

and Maudie had enjoyed such a long marriage of 67 years, and Gailon replied, "I made promises before God."

Gailon was an authentic man. No matter the condition under which someone ran into him, he was the same Gailon. He was not a man of pretense; he was a man respected and loved because he was exactly what he was each and every time. In the last two decades of his life, he lost many close friends and golfing buddies that he was not afraid to mourn for. Gailon often said that losing friends and family was the only drawback to growing older. Heaven's golf course gained a new member as Gailon is hitting the dimpled balls long and straight with his old buddies.

Gailon was preceded in death by his parents, Jessie James and Margaret Annie Thompson Young, three sisters, Ines Williams, Ann Fulgham and Mary Emma Houser, and a brother, James L. "Bud" Young.

Survivors include his wife, Maudie Henry Young of West Point, one daughter, Marilyn Young Ford (Eric) of Columbus, one granddaughter, Brandi Durr (Waid) of Mancos, Colorado, one great-grandson, Axel Joyner Durr of Mancos, Colorado, one sister, Elaine Young Merchant of West Point, and a number of nieces and nephews.

Visitation will be on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, from 12:00-2:00 P.M. at Calvert Funeral Home in West Point. Funeral services with United States Navy Honors will follow at 2:00 P.M. from Calvert Funeral Home Chapel with Mr. Henry Shelton officiating. Calvert Funeral Home of West Point is honored to be entrusted with the arrangements.

Family and friends are invited to West Point Country Club following the services for a celebration of life and a telling of stories.

Pallbearers will be Eric Ford, Waid Durr, Stephen Young, Jesse Young, David Sawtelle, Barry Bryan, George Lott, and Robert Lott.

Honorary Pallbearers will be David Lott, Carsie Young, Jimmy Miller, Clovis Pruett, Jerry Bowen, Carl Bowles, Gary Hamilton, Jim Chandler, Red Rhea, Doug White, Wilson "Pug" Lippincott, J. R. Swindol, Gene Swindol, and his many friends at West Point Country Club.

Memorials may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, Tennessee 38105 or to Children's Hospital of Colorado, 13123 East 16th Avenue Box 045, Aurora, Colorado 80045.

Friends may leave an online condolence at calvertfuneralhome.com

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **15**. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Calvert Funeral Home
P.O. Box 77
27600 East Main Street
West Point, MS 39773
(662) 494-2833
info@calvertfuneralhome.com
<https://www.calvertfuneralhome.com/>

Funeral Service

NOV **15**. 2:00 PM (CT)

Calvert Funeral Home
P.O. Box 77
27600 East Main Street
West Point, MS 39773
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Tribute Wall

JB

“ Jerry B. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. Gailon "Papa" Joyner Young.

Jerry B. - November 15, 2023 at 10:45 AM

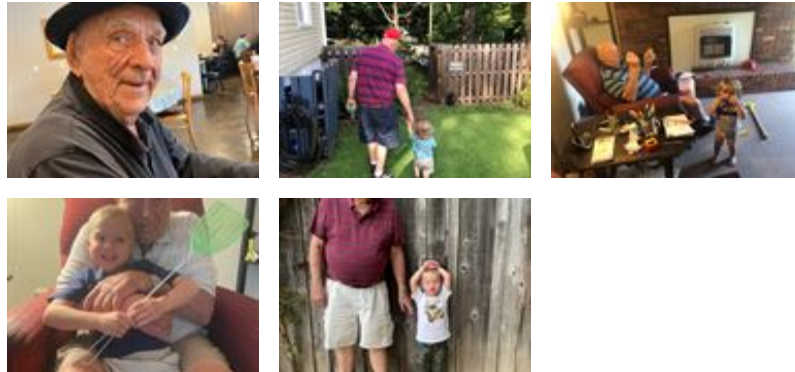
JW

“ "Chub" we called him was my uncle, always smiling, with a mischievous grin, but never malevolent and there lay the seeds of the description of the fine man in his tribute he became. Strikingly to me several of the photos looked so much like my brother Ivan Williams. Take pride, Aunt Maudie in your fine selection of a husband. Jim Williams

Jim Williams - November 14, 2023 at 02:25 PM



“ 45 files added to the album LifeTributes



Calvert Funeral Home - November 14, 2023 at 10:13 AM

PH

“ Bob joins me in sympathy and prayer that you will feel God’s love and comfort as you face this time of great loss. Christ’s Peace.
Priscilla Allen Harper

Priscilla Harper - November 14, 2023 at 08:31 AM

SD

“ I met Gaylon back when I worked for Building Service Company many years ago. They broke the mold after Gaylon was born. He was always a cut up and a lot of fun. I don’t know who wrote his obituary but they did an exceptional job. I loved reading it. I’m so sorry for this loss as I know he will be sorely missed by his family and loved ones. I know Gaylon is up in heaven and meeting up with all of his friends and family that have gone before him and having a good old time. He’s patiently waiting until his family will meet up with him again and it will be a glorious day.
Our thoughts and prayers are with the family.
Sandra (Swords) and Gary Donour

Sandra Donour - November 13, 2023 at 06:17 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Gailon "Papa" Joyner Young.



November 13, 2023 at 04:25 PM