



Arthur "Carl" Kelley

February 16, 1957 - April 3, 2021

"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances; And one man in his time plays many parts." ~Shakespeare

On February 16, 1957, the curtain rose and the spotlight shone when Arthur Carl Kelley made his debut into this world in Muskogee, OK. His parents, AJ and Shirley Elaine (Sullivan) Kelley were thrilled and proud to welcome him. Their pride would only continue to multiply over the years at his many endeavors. A few years later his sister Dena arrived to complete their family of four. Growing up in Muskogee he and his family were active members of New Hope Baptist church. Carl grew up on "Riverside" attending the small public elementary school there where he established some lifelong friendships. He continued on to Alice Robertson Jr. High and finally to Muskogee High School where he was active in (no surprise) theater and choir. He had an absolutely beautiful voice. He graduated in 1975.

Starting as a teenager and into adulthood, he worked summers alongside his good friend, mentor and neighbor, Joe Rector selling fireworks. Perhaps that is where he first learned to love working under pressure in a successful seasonal business. Even though it was long hours, hot and hard work, he enjoyed it immensely and held fond memories of that time throughout his life. While attending New Hope Baptist, he became acquainted with a young woman who caught his eye. Carliss Ann (Jo) Stiglets and Carl wed in a ceremony there in the church. Their daughter Heather rounded out the trio.

When son Jason Carl joined the family, he could not have been more proud. In 1979 Carl joined the ranks of the Muskogee Police Department where he served in many capacities. First on patrol, on to undercover work and then on the "DARE" campaign visiting schools and the community as "McGruff the Crime Dog" educating against the dangers of drug use. Carl and Jo bought a home in Grandview so their children could attend Hilldale schools. They were welcomed and became ingrained in the neighborhood establishing many friendships that have continued to today. As it sometimes happens, a show has a short run. The curtain came to a draw on this First Act but there was much more to come.

His Second Act began with meeting a shy but stunning brunette. Carl met Carrie Faye Worley in 1983 where after a whirlwind romance they wed in June 1984. It might have been a quick courtship but their love and commitment grew and sustained for 37 years. Along with Heather and Jason their family multiplied with the addition of Fallon Nicole and finally Jordan, who made his appearance in 1986 to complete the Kelley clan. Carl loved his children fiercely and equally. Raising them with high standards; he wanted nothing but the best for them all and expected nothing less from them as well.

With any exceptional story, the Third Act was full of change, excitement and adventure. With his family expanded, Carl grew to broaden his horizons on the career front. He left the police department to work as a law enforcement coordinator/victim witness specialist with the U.S. Attorney's office. Although he pursued with great success other business ventures, his true calling and love was always law enforcement. It came to pass though that when opportunity knocked, Carl Kelley would swing the door wide open and usher it in with gusto. While still employed with the U.S. Attorney's office, he and Carrie, after many obstacles and opposition opened Garfield's Restaurant & Pub which they owned and operated it for ten years from 1992-2002. The work they put in led the way for changes to local laws which in turn ushered in a host of new restaurants. This turned the tide for the Muskogee restaurant industry. They went on to open AJ's restaurant and also partnered in Little

Italy, both great additions to the expanding restaurant scene in the community. Unable to keep up with the increasing demands of two full-time jobs, he reluctantly made the choice to leave law enforcement to focus his efforts on business projects. 1995 saw the purchase of the Jackson Hewitt tax franchise. What started out as a good investment expanded over the course of 27 years, three additional territories, five states and 105 offices. His time as a teen working under pressure, selling fireworks, served him well in the long run. Not to rest on his haunches, in 2011 he added yet another franchise. This time, something altogether different, SERVPRO. In every one of these enterprises, although varied, he along with his partner Carrie, built each one from the ground up to achieve incredible prosperity. Now with his children, these ventures will continue to serve the needs of the community. As if that wasn't enough, Carl was highly involved in many charitable and worthy organizations. A founding member of the Exchange Club of Muskogee, he was instrumental in the creation of the annual Chili Cookoff. His support was also strong in CASA, the Education Foundation of Ft. Gibson schools, 4H and FFA in the area.

The Final and Fourth Act. It is hard to tell if he entered the world this way or just evolved but there is no doubt he was larger than life. Not only did he work hard, he played hard. Free time was spent riding Harleys, traveling, playing golf and finding respite in Florida in the water and on his boat. In addition to the many accomplishments and accolades his greatest pride and joy in life was undoubtedly his 6 grandchildren. It began with Colton, followed by Zander, then Thatcher, Rayke, Jack and the most recent addition, Finley Faye.

The close of curtain occurred on April 3, 2021. The Broadway worthy performance that was the life of Arthur Carl Kelley may have ended its run but his legacy will live on for years to come.

He is survived by his wife of 37 years, Carrie Faye Worley Kelley; daughter Heather Ezell and her husband Kevin; son Jason Carl and his wife Ginger,

their two children, Colton and Zander; Fallon Nicole Kelley, sons Thatcher, Rayke, Jack and their father, Brandon Wilson; son Jordan, wife Annie Felts and their daughter Finley Faye; his mother, Shirley Elaine Kelley Kilgore and her husband Robert; his Aunt Ruby, numerous cousins and extended family which meant the world to him, and many good friends as well as innumerable invaluable and long-term employees that he treated like family.

Services are to be held at 2:00pm on Friday, April 9, 2021 at Crescent Valley Baptist Church with interment immediately following at Citizens Cemetery in Ft Gibson.

The family respectfully requests that a mask be worn for all services.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials be made in Carl's memory to CASA, P.O. Box 1274, Muskogee, OK 74402 or online at www.casaok.org

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 6. 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM.

The Family Home

Visitation

APR 7. 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM.

The Family Home

Visitation

APR 8. 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM.

The Family Home

Service

APR 9. 2:00 PM (CT)

Crescent Valley Baptist Church
25641 S Crescent Valley Rd
Tahlequah, OK 74464

Tribute Wall



“ *Cornerstone Funeral Home & Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Arthur "Carl" Kelley*



Cornerstone Funeral Home and Crematory - April 08, 2021 at 10:39 PM



“ *Arthur "Carl" Kelley*

October 23, 2023 at 09:38 AM



“ *Bryan & Lisa DeFoor lit a candle in memory of Arthur "Carl" Kelley*



Bryan & Lisa DeFoor - June 01, 2021 at 10:59 PM



“ *My sincere condolences. Carl was a giant in business and the JH community. His reach was massive and this loss is incalculable. His presence and contributions were always impactful and well respected. He was a good and generous man and will be missed. Prayers for the family to cope with this tragedy.*

George Alberici - April 10, 2021 at 08:20 PM

BZ

“ Thoughts and prayers. Bill Zandi

Bill Zandi - April 09, 2021 at 09:14 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Arthur "Carl" Kelley.



April 08, 2021 at 02:56 PM



“ 72 files added to the album Life Tributes



Cornerstone Funeral Home and Crematory - April 08, 2021 at 11:20 AM

SK

“ So many good memories of Carl...when I was the musical director of the MHS All-School production of "Annie Get Your Gun," Carl portrayed Buffalo Bill so very well. I met his mentor and friend Joe Rector during that time, and Joe did a painting of a dance scene with several of the male dancers, and Daireth Holleyman in a solo dance. Carl and I kept our association and friendship during that time and the years following his graduation. I saw him some years ago during a reunion concert after he had acquired the Jackson Hewitt businesses. My wife and I have always admired Carl's ambition and business acumen. I also took wedding photos for his marriage to Jo, quite a long time ago!

Skip Klingman - April 08, 2021 at 10:20 AM

KV

“ Kim Voyles lit a candle in memory of Arthur "Carl" Kelley



Kim Voyles - April 07, 2021 at 02:12 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Arthur "Carl" Kelley.



April 07, 2021 at 02:04 PM

TS

“ I have great memories of Carl. In the 90s he and I and 15 other community giants sponsored and organized 5 years of "drug free" symposiums for 3-6 graders from all 3 local school districts. We would fill the civic center with young impressionable lives and bring to the stage entertainers and speakers who touted the drug free message through entertainment. It was a major undertaking and Carl was invaluable. I loved working with him!
When Sud died last September, Carl was at his memorial service. As we invited people to speak to their relationship with Sud, Carl stood and with tears in his eyes said that Sud was a "dream maker". As a community banker, he had the opportunity to help many small businesses take wings and fly. I know that Sud made my dreams come true as I know Carl did for you Carrie and kids.
What a great loss for us; what a great gain for heaven!
"My true life is the Anointed One, and dying means gaining more of him." Philipians1:21

Trudy Sudberry - April 07, 2021 at 12:43 PM

CK

Thank you so much for your kind words Trudy. We both have experienced terrible losses.

Carrie Kelley - April 08, 2021 at 04:18 PM

RK

“ Carl will be greatly missed by the community of Muskogee. I myself as a business owner myself really enjoyed doing business with Carl and Carrie, Carl was always pleasant and nice. My condolences goes out to the family, it's very heart breaking to hear this. Love goes to the family and friends remain strong.
Sincerely Roxanne Kirklin



Roxanne Kirklin - April 07, 2021 at 11:49 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Arthur "Carl" Kelley.



April 07, 2021 at 05:29 AM



“ It's very rare that I am at a loss for words but this one renders me dumb. May God bless and be with the Kelley family and all who are mourning the loss of a wonderful man.

Sabrina Massey - April 06, 2021 at 10:31 PM



“ I am so sorry to hear about this I will never forget the kindness that Carl and his family show me during my time of loss The world has lost a kind and caring man

Verna Tollison - April 06, 2021 at 02:05 PM



“ Stephanie Keeton lit a candle in memory of Arthur "Carl" Kelley



Stephanie Keeton - April 06, 2021 at 09:01 AM

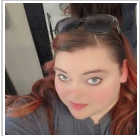
LB

“ Carl was always so kind to me. He always wanted to help others. He mentored other business people at no benefit to himself. He took his time and even allowed his team to help others.

Carl understood the value of passing on knowledge knowing that in business and organizations knowledge and leadership must spread.

It is amazing all that Carl accomplished in his life. Very few can accomplish what he accomplished.

LJ Bryant - April 06, 2021 at 07:55 AM



“ I have had the pleasure to work for Carl for almost 3 years. Carl was a wonderful man and took care of all his employees. I will never forget the day i was working in one of the Jackson hewitt offices in Fayetteville and a man dressed in biker gear walked in the office, he walked straight ti the back office as we were all busy with clients. When i finished the tax return i was working on at that time, i made a comment to the receptionist that he walked in like he owned the place. My area manager then said well he does, that is Carl. I about died from embarrassment. However Carl thought it was funny. I am so blessed by the family we have through this business. I am praying continuously for the family, friends and many loved ones.



Christina Cameron - April 06, 2021 at 04:02 AM