

**From the Cradle to the Grave**  
**Our Legacy of Love and Hope**

**Mr. T.J. White Sr.**  
**March 27, 1928 – August 24, 2004**

T.J. White Sr. was a man of the earth. And his legacy will live on this earth in more ways than one – to be specific 7.

White, born Mar. 27, 1928, was a farmer and while working with the land and equipment he cultivated two gifts: his gift for working with his hands and his relationship with God.

According to his obituary, T.J. was just playing in the dirt, but it turned out to be much more than growing plants.

“It was a gift he shared with his children,” Bertha said. “It taught them how to earn their daily bread.”

Although there are currently only seven of 11 left, the White children went on to earn a bachelor’s in journalism, learn a bit of computer technology, communication and nursing, earn a master’s in business administration, a Juris Doctorate and a doctorate in dental surgery. So no matter if you had to write, build a computer, run a business, defend a speeding ticket or pull a tooth, T.J. White was your man even though White never made it into high school.

“Everything anyone did he felt like he was a part of it,” said Bertha of her husband’s influence on their children.

When T.J. wasn’t working on the farm or working with his children, he was either making someone laugh or taking kids to and from school aboard his No. 33 school bus he drove ironically for 33 years.

According to his funeral program, White drove parent, child and even grandchild to and from school, and they were probably laughing the whole way there.

“Sometimes when you were feeling down he could always think of something to keep you laughing,” said Bertha. “He enjoyed life.”

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Life, his wife and God were three things White held close. He even changed his membership from the Douglas Chapel C.M.E. church to the Mt. Zion M. B. Church in 1958 to be closer to Bertha, who was Baptist.

White himself wasn't new to being in a large immediate family. He was the ninth of 13 children. It was from his father he learned discipline.

According to Bertha, Edward ,White's father, was a strict disciplinarian and White carried that down to his children and she said it was a quality that allowed Bertha and T.J.'s children to be successful.

The foundation of working with their hands and discipline will allow them to carry on the T.J. White legacy and even pass it down to his 16 grandchildren.

White passed away Aug. 24, 2004 and leaves behind four sons, Michael, Durant, Wendell and Darren. He also leaves three daughters Deborah, Clarice and Rhonda as well as 16 grandchildren, one great grandchild, two sisters-in-law and many nieces and nephews.