



Earl Cole

August 24, 1944 - July 25, 2025

Earl Cole, 80, stepped into Glory at 9:15 a.m., Friday, July 25, 2025 from an extended illness. Earl died at home surrounded by his family. He was the last surviving member of his family.

He was born at Richlands, VA and was the son of the late James Stuart and Margaret Taylor Cole.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a son, Ricky Cole; a grandson, Travis Cole, brothers, Kirby Cole, Jimmie Cole and sister in law, Peggy Ann Horn Cole, and brother Donald Odell Cole. He was the last surviving member of his immediate family.

He loved his family, he loved people, and he loved his animals. He was a very generous man and was dedicated to his church and teaching God's Word. He was a lifelong resident of the Whitewood area and was the pastor of The Shelter FWB Church in Whitewood, which he founded in May 1974. Earl began preaching at the age of 11 and was called the "boy" preacher.

Earl owned and operated many businesses throughout his life, beginning with selling Christmas Cards when he was 6 years old. He operated a gas/service station from his teen years, he had a coal trucking business, and in 1977 he built and operated a Rest Home for elderly and disabled adults, something he

had planned from when he was a young boy. Then he went into the steakhouse business, "The Golden Coach", and had 5 steakhouses at one point. Earl was the Publisher of The Voice newspaper, which he founded in 2003.

He loved this, because he was able to talk to and meet so many people that he loved to interact with.

He had a radio show, "County Talk" for many years, and was dedicated to informing county citizens of issues going on in the county that affect their lives. He was passionate about having an outlet for people to share their opinions on county issues. And of course he was passionate about sharing his opinion with everyone, even if and when it was not a popular opinion.

Earl is survived by his wife of 60 years, Christine, and sons Harold Cole of Whitewood, VA and Hayden Cole of the home. He is also survived by granddaughters Tessia Cole Helton and Heather Cole, grandsons Trevor Cole and Trent Cole, great grandchildren, Camden Cole, Trinity Cole, Zoie Helton, Mila Cole, Kye Rigsby, Kyren Rigsby, Kilhana Rigsby, Aubrey Cole and Adleigh Cole.

Special thanks to Ultra Health Home Care and Hospice: Chad Hurley, Tangie Scarberry, and Carrie Matney.

Funeral Services for Earl Cole will be conducted Sunday, August 3, 2025 at 2 pm at the Hurst Scott Funeral Chapel in Richlands, VA with Rev. Columbus Baker, Jr and Mike Lawson officiating. A visitation will be held at the funeral home on Saturday from 6-9 pm.

Hurst-Scott Funeral Home in Richlands is in charge of arrangements. Those wishing to express sympathy may do so at www.hurstscottfunerlahomes.com

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 2. 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

Hurst-Scott Funeral Home
1401 2nd Street
Richlands, VA 24641
<http://www.hurstscottfuneralhomes.com>

Funeral Service

AUG 3. 2:00 PM (ET)

Hurst-Scott Funeral Home
1401 2nd Street
Richlands, VA 24641
<http://www.hurstscottfuneralhomes.com>

Tribute Wall



“ Hurst-Scott Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Earl Cole



Hurst-Scott Funeral Home - August 07, 2025 at 11:25 AM

SD

“ I was as little girl of about 11 or 12 when I first heard Earl Cole preach and he was young then maybe just after he got married. I still remember the effect he had on my mother as well. and I am 72 today and remember so well

Sue Bowman Debord - August 14, 2025 at 08:15 AM

BK

“ My deepest condolences to family and friends.. I've known Earl all my life.. went to Sunday School with him and his family for years as a very young girl at Rosa Cole Church.. he and Christine were the same every time I saw them: friendly, kind willing to lean a helping hand to any one.. will greatly be missed.. prayers for all.. 🙏

Bonnie Keen - August 01, 2025 at 08:26 PM

HC

“ *Hobert and Diane Cole purchased the Beautiful i
n Blue for the family of Earl Cole.*



Hobert and Diane Cole - July 31, 2025 at 07:18 PM

HC

“ *Hobert and Diane Cole planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Earl Cole.*

Hobert and Diane Cole - July 31, 2025 at 07:18 PM

JB

“ *Christine and family, we send our deepest
condolences, in loss of your Loved one. Earl
will be missed, by everyone, who had the
honor, to be his friend.*



Jack and Eunice Breeden - July 30, 2025 at 07:08 PM

SC

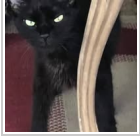
“ *Christine, and all the family: I grew up with Earl and Christine, we
were kids together. Our families were always close. We shared a
love for the Whitewood community and the mission of Christ's love
for everyone. God Bless you all and wish Chris the best to continue
in this calling. Prayers and Love to all Sandra, Ron, and Sean Cole*

Sandra Cole - July 30, 2025 at 04:26 PM

TB

“ Heart felt prayers to Christine and the family, All my memories of Earl always end up with a big smile ,Love to you all

Tommie Breeden - July 29, 2025 at 01:48 PM



“ Davie Horton lit a candle in memory of Earl Cole



Davie Horton - July 28, 2025 at 06:57 PM

GA

“ GlendaRB Altizer lit a candle in memory of Earl Cole



GlendaRB Altizer - July 28, 2025 at 03:33 PM



“ TonyanEdgar Wicks lit a candle in memory of Earl Cole



TonyanEdgar Wicks - July 28, 2025 at 11:11 AM

LN

“ *Leroy & Angie Nelson lit a candle in memory of Earl Cole*



Leroy & Angie Nelson - July 27, 2025 at 09:57 PM

EL

“ *My condolences to Earl's family. Many prayers going up for them. May they find the peace that passes all understanding during this time.*

Ernestine Looney - July 27, 2025 at 09:47 PM

LC

“ *Lynne Clark sent a virtual gift in memory of Earl Cole*



Lynne Clark - July 27, 2025 at 09:43 PM

LC

“ I have so many wonderful memories of Earl, but my absolute favorite is of teaching him about the Vietnam Women’s Memorial. The VN Mobile Wall was brought to Richlands several years ago. I had explained to a group of teens the symbolism of The Wall and also of the significance of the 3 Soldiers standing at the entrance to The Wall. The three soldiers represent, “Our fathers, our brothers, our friends.” As I was explaining this to the teens, Earl joined in the lesson. I explained the meanings of the crosses and the diamonds engraved into the wall. Earl found this very interesting. As we walked to the VietNam Women’s Memorial, Earl tagged right along. He stood there listening to what I was saying, and his questions were inspiring to others. I lent him a copy of the handbook I had used for years while interpreting for the deaf and hard-of-hearing at The Memorial.



While well worn and much loved, Earl held on to my copy until a few years ago. He came to my Dad’s visitation and brought my book back. It was a little more worn, had been handled carefully, and Earl had written little notes throughout my handbook that he was seeking answers for. I was so proud to be able to tell Earl something he didn’t know. Earl later told me he had read that little book several times but still had a page and a half of questions. We sat at Hardee’s in Richlands on a Tuesday afternoon discussing what he wanted to know. Earl loved learning!

When I lost my Mom, Earl was one of the first to call me. He always had a sense about him and he knew when you needed a little push or an even bigger shove. Earl was a stronghold for so many people. He and my Mom always had something to say to the other and it always ended up being an uproaring time! They had a very healthy rivalry and neither would back down.

It was an honor and privilege to know Earl. When I started my career at UVA, I was telling Earl at a family reunion how my

colleagues were kidding me about being from the “University of Grundy”. Earl just smiled and said, “Sissy, you stand up and be proud! I’m sure Grundy will one day be famous for something!”

I’ve looked back over time, rethought most of our conversations, and reviewed our “healthy” political views. I’ve been blessed to know this intelligent man, who had dreams he pursued, and ideas and changes he made. Who would ever have thought “The Voice” would be a weekly read for staff and administrators at UVA? My copy was passed around so many times. I’m so glad people outside our area got a glimpse of the man who shared “his voice”.

Rest well my friend! You made an impact on more people than you will ever know! Thank you for allowing me to share the VietNam Memorials with you. And thank you for keeping me in the loop of Buchanan County, VA. Always remember, our roots run deep.

With love, hugs, and prayers for your precious family...❤️😊🙏

Your Buchanan County friend, Lynne

Lynne Clark - July 27, 2025 at 09:42 PM

EB

I knew Earl my entire life, he actually married me and my husband who was killed in Viet Nam a year later. I saw Earl thru the years and we talked. The later years Earl got into the case of the man who murdered my son. Although Earl being the man he was he tried to get every detail of the devastating story of how my son was murdered. In doing so Earl got to know that man as he saw him and of course Earl and I didn't agree on that at all. We spoke several times and he was determined that man was innocent in his mind but I know he isn't. Earl and I never got bitter at each other and I knew he was doing what he liked to do but I knew that man was lying to Earl. Earl was a good man from a great family that helped people. My prayers for Christine and the family in the coming days for peace and comfort as they go through the services for Earl, May God Bless you ..

Elaine Batten - July 28, 2025 at 10:11 AM

EB

I knew Earl my entire life growing up in Whitewood. Earl precious mother was my first grade teacher. Later Earl married me and my husband who was killed in Viet Nam a year later. I saw Earl thru the years we talked. Later in years Earl got interested in the case of the man who murdered my son. He posted a lot of those stories in his voice newspaper. As Earl got into this I realized that man was telling Earl a lot of lies and Earl was believing that man. So me being the mother of a murdered child got in touch with Earl. Earl and I spoke several times on the phone and Earl actually met that man in prison from what Earl told me. But me knowing what I knew and sitting through the trial of that man was sure that man was quality of murder and my son was taken from us at 23 years old. But Earl continued his interviews with the man and Earl and I spoke about it and of course the man is still in prison where he belongs. Earl and I never got bitter toward each other though we disagree, we never disrespect each other. Earl and his family were a great family from Whitewood and helped a lot of people. My prayers are with Christine the boys and rest of family thru the coming days. May God Bless you and give you peace and Comfort. Elaine Church Batten

Elaine Batten - July 28, 2025 at 10:35 AM