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Charles Edward "Charlie" Sasser

April 21, 1926 - June 17, 2017

On June 17, 2017, the well and fully lived life of Charles Edward ("Charlie") Sasser came to a peaceful close. Born on April 21, 1926 in Goldsboro, North Carolina to Roland Wright Sasser and Carrie Wright (Bryant) Sasser, Charlie grew up during the depression in Goldsboro, Clinton and Wilmington, North Carolina.

He graduated from Wilmington's New Hanover High School in 1944 and in August of that year enlisted in the Army. After basic training in North Carolina and Missouri, Charlie joined the 337th Signal Service Company (SIAM). His unit was attached to the U.S. Tenth Army Headquarters' 20th Armored Group for the Battle of Okinawa. He was wounded and awarded the Purple Heart. After a period of convalescence in a California veterans rehabilitation facility, he returned home and was honorably discharged.

After service, while attending a junior college on the GI Bill, he wrote for the college newspaper and found he loved it. He enrolled in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and entered its Journalism School, graduating in 1949, but not before making an impression on Professor Walter Spearman, who remembered Charlie 23 years later to one of his sons, then at UNC.

Soon after taking his first newspapering job as a reporter for the Greensboro Daily

Record, Charlie met the love and sweetheart of his life, Elizabeth Hubert ("Betty") McBrayer, on a blind date to the Barnum & Bailey Circus. They were married in 1951 in Reidsville, North Carolina, and moved to Morganton, where Charlie went to work for the Morganton News Herald under its longtime publisher, Beatrice Cobb. Though his growing family soon prompted him to change careers, all who knew and loved Charlie understood he never forsook his first love, writing.

After transitioning from the newspaper, Charlie enjoyed driving the back roads and highways of western North Carolina as a regional account representative with Royal McBee before finding his lifelong career in the furniture industry, eventually working as a Regional Sales Manager for Bernhardt Furniture in Lenoir, and later in the contract divisions of Morganton's Drexel Home Furnishings.

Most important, Charlie's new career path, after a few brief months in Charlotte and then Reidsville, allowed Betty and him to raise their family in Morganton, where they had found a wonderful, engaging set of friends and a welcoming community and natural setting like no other. Here, Charlie found kindred souls, great friends and a place he could enjoy all that he was most passionate about: great music of all kinds, and particularly jazz; tennis, especially when played with his best friends at The West Union Athletic Club or on their many outings to Hilton Head or Linville; fishing, whether at the coast or in a mountain stream; and a community mindedness and dedication to giving back that became a defining mark of Charlie's entire life. It was in this part of his life that Charlie conceived, organized or fostered – with literally thousands of hours never mentioned -- a multitude of charitable works, like Burke County's Cup of Cheer and Avery County's Par Plus, both of which benefit school children and families in need; his jazz concert fundraisers for Habitat for Humanity; or The Burke Arts Council's October Oyster Outing. The time and commitment Charlie devoted to these causes had no bounds.

During their first twelve years of marriage, Charlie and Betty welcomed four beloved children into the world: Charles McBrayer ("Mac") Sasser, now of Charlotte; Thomas Harper Sasser (wife Whitney) also of Charlotte; Sarah Sasser Williams (husband David), of Morganton, and Edward Pride Sasser (wife Charmaine), of Cebu City, the Philippines and Morganton. Charlie was immensely proud of each of his children and

Philippines and Morganton. Charlie was immensely proud of each of his children and their accomplishments. As the years passed, though, he was made happiest when he and Betty were blessed with eight cherished grandchildren, each of whom he doted on and loved dearly: Miles and Holden Sasser (parents Tom and Whitney); Elizabeth and Henry Williams (parents Sarah and David); Ben and Claire Sasser (father Mac); and Liz and Allie Sasser (parents Pride and Charmaine). One of Charlie's favorite quotes was an anonymous author's: "...the world may be a little better because I was important in the life of a child." Betty, Charlie's beloved and treasured bride of 65 years, as well as their children and their children's families, survive him.

Charlie is also survived by his loving and devoted sister, Dorothy Sasser Sellers, of Shallote, with whom he shared his love of the marshes and the sea; nephews William T. ("Bill") Sellers, Jr.(wife Beth), of Oro Valley, Arizona, and Roland Wright ("Rick") Sasser, III (wife Vicky) of Augusta, Georgia; niece Diane Sasser Goldfinch, of Murrell's Inlet, South Carolina; great nephews and nieces, including Claire Elizabeth Sellers and Robert Steven Sellers; Tim O'Connor; William Goldfinch and Jessica Goldfinch; and Creston Haddon and Laura Haddon; and several great, great nephews and nieces.

A cherished older brother and mentor, Roland Wright Sasser, Jr. (wife Betty), brother-in-law William T. Sellers and niece Sandra Sasser Haddon, pre-deceased Charlie.

A Service of Celebration of Charlie Sasser's life will be held at 11am on Thursday, June 22, 2017, at The First Presbyterian Church in Morganton with the Rev. Dr. Matthew Brown and the Rev. Beth Ann Miller officiating. The family will receive friends at CoMMA immediately following the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Par Plus, c/o GMGCC, PO Box 2120, Linville, NC, 28646; Burke United Christian Ministries, 305 B West Union Street, Morganton, NC 28655; or Burke Hospice and Palliative Care, Inc., 1721 Enon Road, Valdese, NC 28690.

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family.

Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.