



Ernest "Ernie" Howard Nivens

January 6, 1930 - April 4, 2010

Ernest H.(Ernie) Nivens, Christian servant, loving husband, devoted father and faithful friend, entered eternal rest on April 4, 2010. Ernie was born in Sylacauga, Alabama on January 6, 1930 to James S. Nivens and Mae Talley Nivens. In 1936, the family moved to Gainesville, GA where Ernie grew up. He was an All-State football player and earned much recognition for his athletic talents. Ernie was offered several college football scholarships and chose to play for Erskine College where he graduated in 1953.

Ernie began his career teaching and coaching football in McBee, SC where he met his wife Dorothy Leviner. After their marriage in 1954, Ernie and Dot moved to Great Falls, SC where he taught and coached until 1958. In 1958, Ernie, Dot and their 6 week old daughter came to Irmo, SC. At Irmo High School, he was the head football coach and athletic director and enjoyed many winning seasons and championship teams. Ernie served as Irmo's only police officer from 1958 until 1967. In 1967, he received his MBA from Western Carolina University. Ernie ended his coaching career in 1971 when he became assistant principal at Irmo. From 1979 until his retirement in 1989, Ernie served as Director of Transportation for Lexington School District 5.

A man of faith, Ernie served as a deacon at Dutch Fork Baptist Church and Chapin Baptist Church. He was a Gideon for many years, a charter member of the Irmo Ruritan Club and was active in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. A great storyteller, Ernie regularly shared his humor along with words of kindness and encouragement with others. He was a man of

character and integrity, and most of all a strong Christian. After his retirement, he and Dot traveled extensively throughout the world. He was actively involved in mission work in Moldova, traveling there 13 times. Ernie and Dot established a ministry for the elderly at Gethsemane Baptist Church in Chisinau where they worked for the past 14 years. On the children's cancer ward, Ernie began a special photo ministry. Many of the children had never had their photograph made and Ernie would provide one for the family. He was also instrumental in getting playground equipment to an orphanage in the northern city of Costesti. Ernie and Dot became surrogate parents to Pastor Alexander and Nadia Gonchuruk and grandparents to their 5 children. Ernie was much loved by those he met in Moldova. His loss will be mourned but his contributions will endure. Ernie leaves his wife of 55 years, Dorothy Leviner Nivens; two daughters, Pamela Nivens White (Graham) and Michelle Nivens Munson (Joe); four grandchildren, Christopher Ryan Cook, Corey Ashton Cook, Clay Joseph Munson and Taylor Michelle Munson. He is also survived by his brother James Edward Nivens and his wife Jackie. Ernie was predeceased by his sister Betty Nivens Nelson. He leaves many wonderful friends, traveling companions, Koinonia Sunday School classmates, mission friends and other loved ones throughout the world. He will be greatly missed. Visitation will be Tuesday night from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Riverland Hills Baptist Church. The funeral will be held at the Riverland Hills Baptist Church at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday with interment at 3:00 p.m. in McBee Cemetery, McBee, SC. Memorials may be made either to Missions with Dignity, 2401 Cedar Springs Rd., Dallas, TX 75201-1498 or Gideons International, Box 140800, Nashville, TN 37214-0800. Brown-Pennington-Atkins is serving the family.

Tribute Wall



“ I read the wonderful obituary on Mr. Ernie Nivens in the paper and was sad to hear of his passing. Pam always had such fond stories of her Dad that I felt like I had met Ernie. My thoughts and prayers are with the family in this time of loss.##imported-begin##mary neuffer##imported-end##

April 07, 2010 at 08:41 PM



“ Dear Dot and family ,

You have been on my mind lately a lot and then I read about Ernie . I needed you to know how sorry I am for your loss and that you are in my prayers .

I did not know Ernie as well as I did you but I do remember being at your house after school and how Ernie always seemed in such a good mood .

I know you will miss him a lot and pray God will be close to you and comfort you .

Love ,

Chris##imported-begin##Chris Van Erkelens##imported-end##

April 07, 2010 at 10:38 AM



“ *Dot and Family - -*

Coach Nivens shaped me in many ways both on the football field, running track, drivers ed, or just in conversation. I treasure all he did for me and so many students who passed through the halls of Irmo High School.

Thus, you as his family are truly blessed to have his love and devotion as a husband, a father and to all a friend.

My thoughts and prayers are with you.

Mendal Bouknight

Irmo High School, Class of 1970 *##imported-begin##Mendal Bouknight##imported-end##*

April 06, 2010 at 08:17 PM



“ *Our condolences to the Nivens family. Ernie was a long time friend and will be missed.* *##imported-begin##Mary and Jack Watson`##imported-end##*

April 05, 2010 at 10:34 PM



“ *Dot. I'm sure you won't remember me, but Mr. Nivens was my teacher when he was at McBee. I was in class with your brother Johnney and remember Mr. Nivens well. Always enjoyed his class as he seemed to be a fun-loving person and would always make us laugh. Have thought of you two often over the years -- I remember you playing basket-ball. May God bless and was so happy to read about the work for God both of you were involved in. Will be thinking of you during your time of sorrow. Doris###imported-begin###Doris Outlaw Atkinson###imported-end###*

April 05, 2010 at 05:40 PM



“ *Dot and family,
What a wonderful legacy Ernie has left for all who follow after him.
What an example of a truly godly man, unashamed to live for the Lord in any setting. He will be dearly missed.
I am praying for you,
Much love
Claudia###imported-begin###Claudia Gandy###imported-end###*

April 05, 2010 at 03:19 PM



“ Dear Dot & Family-

I am so thankful for Ernie's life and his witness as a follower of Christ. He showed us how to live and how to die; with a steadfast faith in Jesus Christ. While you and we hurt over his passing, we know we will see him again on the other side.

As we visited we Ernie on Wednesday, I was so struck by his confidence in "being absent from the body means an immediate presence with the Lord"!

Lynda and I are praying for you!

Blessings,

Mike Bledsoe (& Lynda)##imported-begin##Mike

Bledsoe##imported-end##

April 05, 2010 at 08:34 AM