



## Mr. Jerry Willis

May 11, 1949 - October 23, 2017

Jerry Willis, 68, of Pittsfield, passed away peacefully surrounded by family in Port Charlotte, Florida on Monday, Oct. 23, after a long struggle with cancer. Jerry Willis was born in Chicago, Illinois on May 11, 1949 to Julia Street and Warnell Willis(pre-deceased). He was raised by his great Uncle Otha P. Street and his wife Apenda Street(pre-deceased) from the age of 9 months while living in Roanoke, Virginia. The family moved to Pittsfield when he was 12 years old. He attended the former South Junior High, then went on to graduate from Pittsfield High School in 1969. During his youth, he was a member of Pittsfield Cavaliers drum and bugle corps as a drummer from 1965-1967. Jerry enlisted in the US Army on October 30, 1969, and completed his basic training at Fort Dix, New Jersey. He served in Vietnam from July 2, 1970 to April 22, 1971 as an aircraft electrician. He received an Honorable discharge in April 1972. He was a member of the Second Congregational Church and the Berkshire County branch of the NAACP. On December 23, 1972, he married Marlena Lee of Hancock, MA and had two children Santha and Shane. He worked for H.V. Rabouin Inc. for 41 years as a transporter and retired in 2015. For all his years of dedication to safety on the highways, Jerry was inducted into the One Million Mile Club sponsored by Caterpillar Inc.

In his spare time, he liked to tinker on anything electrical and mechanical; especially automobiles. He was known as a “jack of all trades” and was lovingly referred to as “MacGyver” by those closest to him. Jerry enjoyed,

fishing, golfing, biking and bowling. He also enjoyed music; especially listening to Jazz, watching comedy and movies of all genres.

Jerry leaves behind his wife, Marlena Willis of Pittsfield, MA, daughter Santha Willis, and son Shane Willis and his wife Shana Pierce-Willis, two grandsons Averil and Shaney Willis- all of Port Charlotte, Florida. He also leaves sisters Arnetta Sandifer (John), Apenda Walker(Frank)-both of Pittsfield; Bonnie Lewis of Fort Wayne, Indiana; Renee Willis of Elkhart, Indiana; and Patricia Willis of Chicago, Illinois. Brothers Michael Jones, Nickolas Jones, and Kenneth Jones- all of Pittsfield; Michael Willis, Harold Willis and Hugh Willis (Verlinda) Willis of Chicago, Illinois; Billy Willis (Betty) of Cassopolis, Michigan, and Warnell Willis, Jr. of Colorado. He was pre-deceased by his two brothers Bernie Street and George Jones of Pittsfield, a brother-in-law, Thomas Lewis of Fort Wayne, Indiana and a nephew, Adam Sandifer. He also leaves behind a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, in-laws and friends to mourn him.

Funeral Notice:

Funeral services for Mr. Jerry Willis will be Saturday, November 11, 2017, at 11 a.m. at the Second Congregational Church. Prior to the service, beginning at 10 a.m., there will be an hour of visitation with the family. Burial will be at a later date. Calling hours will be held Friday, November 10, 2017 from 5 p.m. until 7p.m. at the Dwyer Funeral Home, 776 North St., Pittsfield, MA. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Second Congregational Church Benevolence Fund, care of the Dwyer Funeral Home, in his memory.

**DONATIONS CANNOT BE MADE ONLINE, BUT MAY BE MADE THROUGH THE FUNERAL HOME.**

# Previous Events

## Visitation

NOV **10**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Dwyer Family Funeral Home  
776 North Street  
Pittsfield, MA 01201  
(413) 442-5094  
info@dwyerfuneral.com  
<https://www.dwyerfuneral.com/>

## Service

NOV **11**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Second Congregational Church  
50 Onota St  
Pittsfield, MA 01201

# Tribute Wall

AM

“ Every time I met Jerry he had a smile and a friendly hand shake. He always looked out for my daughter Jenine's safety. I could tell from our first meeting that my daughter had a good family looking out for her. I will miss Jerry. Andy Moro

Andy Moro - November 10, 2017 at 04:23 PM



Thank you.

Santha Willis - November 14, 2017 at 10:25 PM

RD

“ When I was kid getting into Trucking, Jerry was one of my better teachers and "The guy to watch" As the great Henry Rabouin would say. He always had a clean good looking rig and was a professional as drivers use to be back in the day. They just don't make em' like that any more. May the Salt and Pepper gang roll on forever. . . Bobby and Florence Dodge

Robert Dodge - November 10, 2017 at 04:01 PM



Thank you. JW and JD are rolling down the highway of heaven. Miss them dearly.

Santha Willis - November 14, 2017 at 10:26 PM



“ 4 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Dwyer Funeral Home Inc. - November 10, 2017 at 02:27 PM



“ 44 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Dwyer Funeral Home Inc. - November 10, 2017 at 10:56 AM



“ *Dear Marlena and family,*

*So sorry for your loss. Our thoughts are with you.*

*Diane and Chuck Pero*

Diane Pero - November 09, 2017 at 05:24 AM



Santha Willis

*Thank you*

**Santha Willis** - November 14, 2017 at 10:30 PM

AW

“ *Apenda and Frank Walker purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Mr. Jerry Willis.*



**Apenda and Frank Walker** - November 08, 2017 at 05:12 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Jerry Willis.*



November 08, 2017 at 03:06 PM

TF

“ *My condolences to you Santha and your family*



**Tiondra Fullen & Family** - November 08, 2017 at 02:53 PM



Santha Willis

*Thank you.*

**Santha Willis** - November 14, 2017 at 01:40 PM

SB

“ *Shirley Caulton, Jajuan Caulton and Yvette Brantley purchased the Sentiments of Serenity S pray for the family of Mr. Jerry Willis.*



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**Shirley Caulton, Jajuan Caulton and Yvette Brantley -**  
November 07, 2017 at 01:34 PM