

Clair C. Chaffin

Our Dad grew up during the depression. He and his brothers helped his father do what needed to be done to put food on the table. He was brought up to work for what he needed.

During World War II he joined the Navy and became a corpsman, and then later was transferred to the Marines. He put his life on the line to serve his country. A corpsman keeps going from wounded to wounded with no thought about his own safety. It was the nature of the job.

Due to the war, he never made it past the 10th grade. Our father eventually received a diploma when Gov. Jed Bush granted diplomas to those who could not finish high school due World War II.

During the war, he was in the Pacific on Roi-Namur, Saipan, Tinian and Iwo Jima. He would give medical aid to other marines in the heat of battle on front lines and in foxholes. He always gave aid where the men were, no matter where they were.

When he got out of the service, he would support his family working up to 16 hours a day. He worked his way up in construction to eventually become a superintendent. He has been in charge of many multi-million dollar projects including VA Medical Centers over the years and around the country.

Growing up, we always had some relatives living with us. Dad always thought it was important that all the young people have the chance to make something of themselves. He carried through with this philosophy all of his life. He and my mother donated to many charities that they felt were worthy. This included some Indian schools, the Boy Scouts of America, the Florida Sheriff's boy's ranch, St. Jude's Hospital, and his latest, helping support the Young Marines in Gainesville. They may not have had much money when they were young, but children always came first. Furthermore, he was always giving of his time for various organizations for speeches and helping young people grow. He helped the Marines every year wrap presents for Toys for Tots. In fact, he would not leave for his last trip until he went to the Young Marines function on Saturday, June 6th, 2009...two days before he was killed.

When he became involved in the Marine organizations, he always downplayed his roles. I did not realize how much this meant since he did not like to talk about the War with his daughters. We did not know that he had been awarded the Silver Star during the war until after we were grown. He was a very modest man. In addition, he was also brought up to be gentlemen and would always make you wait to get in and out of the car so that he could open the doors.

Our father was a kind and loving man who would do anything to help anyone, no matter what the effort. He saved and touched so many people's lives. He did not deserve to be taken from us in the manner that he was. Therefore, the people accused of killing him should not be allowed out before the trial. Please do not set bail for these people.

You're Honor,

The family of Clair C. Chaffin would like to respectfully request that bail be denied to the two men being held in the death of our father. We feel that they would definitely be a flight risk. We hope that our father's death will mean that they will not be free to attack and possibly kill anyone else.

Our father joined the service at the age of 17 because two of his brothers were killed in submarines in WWII. Clair was in the Pacific and was involved in the fighting in Tinian, Roi Namor, Siapan and Iwo Jima. He was awarded the Silver Star for rescuing seven men wounded on the front line on Siapan. Clair was an amazing man, who at the age of 83 could do one handed push ups, drive a car fourteen hours straight and mow his two acre yard. He spoke at schools and the Florida Boys Ranch concerning the war and how all things are possible in their lives. He donated to many charities, took in relatives when they needed help and he help his neighbors with roofs, barns, etc. He would give the shirt off his back to anyone in need. He started from very humble beginnings to become a man well respected who called many Generals by their first name. Dad was a good man who loved God, his family and his country.

At his memorial service the large church was filled to capacity. People came from all over the nation to honor his memory from as far as California and Maine. Many more sent their respects but were too feeble to make the trip.

Dad may have been 83 but he still had many years ahead of him. His brother who will be 90 on Christmas Eve just completed building an addition to his house. My dad came from a sturdy long living family. He took a trip to Ireland last year and after his business meeting with the 4th Marine Division Association in Virginia, he and a friend were going to drive across the Canadian Rockies taking about 3 weeks to see the sites along the way.

He was our family's hero. His death has devastated the family. Several of us have nightmares concerning the way he died. It is one thing to lose a family member in a natural death. It hurts but it is part of life and can be accepted eventually. Death by violence is another matter completely. We worry about whether he suffered, the thoughts going through his mind in his last minutes and how someone could kill such an amazing 83 year old man. One of our sister's was unable to make the trip because she has not yet come to terms with his death and is unable to look at the men responsible for it.

It is our hope that Dad's death will not be in vain. It is our wishes that his assailants will be kept off the streets so they cannot injure or murder anyone else.

Sincerely,