



Johnnie Earl Griffin

October 30, 1944 - January 23, 2019

Johnnie Earl Griffin, former Groveland city council member, veteran, successful business owner and musician, died Wednesday evening at the age of 74. He was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He had been in declining health for several years but finished out his term as a council member last fall after serving 17 years.

In a message informing City of Groveland employees, City Manager Mike Hein said, “In a time when it seems people are quick to draw lines and find ways to differentiate themselves from others, Councilman Griffin showed us how we are better off working to find commonalities and shared purpose,” adding “To the end, he was full of grace.”

Griffin was a Groveland native, born Oct. 30, 1944. He attended Edgewood Elementary School in Groveland and was one of the first graduates of Lincoln Park High School in Clermont. He served in the U.S. Army from 1965-1967, where he developed his talent for graphic design. After serving in the military, he was a drummer in a popular band called the TCB Express. He played for 14 years with longtime Groveland friend, Joey Gilmore. More recently, he devoted his talents to playing in praise bands at several south Lake County churches.

Griffin was a successful cattle rancher and was founder and president of

Tamjo Signs. He had a lifelong love of history and was one of the area's most respected authorities on black and Seminole history, lecturing across the country. He was a close friend of tribal leaders. For years, he played the role of a Seminole warrior at the annual Dade Battlefield Re-enactment.

Among his many other interests were collecting comic books and a lifelong fascination with the American Wild West and cowboys.

But it was his love of family and community where Griffin found his true devotion. He took pride in representing all people and encouraged kindness and inclusiveness.

"He was my hero," said his daughter, Tamu Griffin. "He was somebody you looked up to," daughter, Joannie Griffin said. "He was the best grandpa you could ever have," said granddaughter Michaela.

"He was the best husband, the best partner I could ever have. He was compassionate and loving in all areas," said Laverne Griffin.

Son Mike Dozier remembers always winning costume contests because his talented dad could create extraordinary outfits, like a jet that had realistic smoke.

During the 17 years he served on the city council, including as vice mayor, he supported many initiatives and improvements, including: the James Wyche Senior Center, the John Wesley Griffin playground, the David Blanks playground, the Ronald Gaffney dog park, the Elese Tomlin Community Center, Eagle Ridge Shoppes, the Trilogy development and the Groveland Historical Museum.

Last October, the City of Groveland honored Griffin with a reception, where he

was presented commemorative plaques from the Groveland Police Department and Groveland Historical Society. Congressman Daniel Webster presented Griffin with an American flag that had flown over the Capitol in Washington, D.C. Former Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam sent a letter of commendation, and the city presented Griffin with a virtual Honor Flight to the nation's capital.

Griffin's fellow Council members expressed sorrow upon learning of his death:

"Mr. Griffin set an example for all to follow, especially when it comes to serving others," said Mayor Evelyn Wilson.

"It was a privilege to serve with Mr. Griffin," said Vice Mayor Mike Radzik, who worked with Griffin on a number of projects, including the Elese Tomlin Community Center. "Our hearts and prayers are with his wife and family. His passing is a loss to our entire community."

"I appreciated Mr. Griffin's support for the veterans in our community," said Council Member Dina Sweatt. "He was compassionate and wanted peace for everyone."

"I extend my sincere sympathy to the Griffin family. John Griffin was untiring in his efforts to improve the lives of others in the Groveland community. We have lost a friend and an invaluable link to the city's history," said Council Member Mike Smith.

Council Member Jeff Shoobridge, who was elected to Griffin's vacant seat said, "I am deeply saddened to learn of Mr. Griffin's passing. I had the utmost respect for him and am dedicated to living up to his legacy."

In addition to his wife, Laverne, Griffin is survived by his daughters, Joannie Griffin and Tamu Griffin; his sons, Joseph Griffin and Mike Dozier (Rosemary) and granddaughter Michaela Dozier; brother, Sam Griffin (Calice) and beloved nieces and nephews.

The public viewing will be Saturday, Feb. 2, at 11 a.m. at the Family Center, at 2500 S. Highway 27, in Clermont. The funeral services begin at 2 p.m. Burial is scheduled for Monday, Feb. 4, at 11:30 a.m. at the Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell.

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 2. 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Family Christian Center
2500 S. Highway 27
Clermont, FL 34711

Service

FEB 2. 2:00 PM (ET)

Family Christian Center
2500 S. Highway 27
Clermont, FL 34711

Florida National Cemetery Burial

FEB 4. 11:30 AM (ET)

Florida National Cemetery
6502 S.W. 102nd Ave,
Bushnell, FL 33513

Tribute Wall



“ *Johnnie Earl Griffin*

October 22, 2023 at 05:49 PM



“ *My Family Sends our Deepest Condolences To Mrs Laverne Griffin and Family on the Passing Of Mr. Griffin. Gone too Soon. May God Be With You..*

Mr. Griffin's Love and Kind Ways will forever Dwell in Us as we Remember Him for his Gentleness, Kind and Givingness. He was a Great Teacher to Us About the Seminole Culture. We thought we had many more years to grow from him. We will miss him. Our Condolences, to All Friends and Family.

The Lovenia Raspberry Family

Gone but not Forgotten

Lest We Forget

Lovenia Raspberry - February 03, 2019 at 12:27 PM



“ *Mr. Richard & Mrs. Delwynn Griffin Turner purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Johnnie Earl Griffin.*



Mr. Richard & Mrs. Delwynn Griffin Turner - February 01, 2019 at 04:06 PM

TB

“ *TANCIE L BOSTIC lit a candle in memory of
Johnnie Earl Griffin*



TANCIE L BOSTIC - January 29, 2019 at 02:25 PM