



James Ronald Foster

May 24, 1943 - May 19, 2025

James R. “Ronnie” Foster, age 81, of Manassas, VA, formerly of Mercer, PA, died on May 19, 2025, after a long journey with Alzheimer’s.

Ronnie was devoted to his family. He built a life rooted in love and loyalty with his wife of nearly 63 years, the former Carol Malone, and was a supportive, proud father to their two daughters, Lori and Brenda. In later years, nothing brought him more joy than being “Grampy” to his granddaughter, Melody. He also deeply valued the friendship he shared with his son-in-law, David.

Born in Brownton, WV, on May 24, 1943, Ronnie was one of eleven children. He graduated from Hickory High School in Hermitage, PA, in 1961 and married his high school sweetheart, Carol, the following year. He proudly served in the U.S. Army as a company clerk and truck driver, with assignments in Kentucky, Virginia, California, and Chinon, France.

He was a man with many talents and a very big heart. Throughout his life, Ronnie supported his family as a service station manager, mechanic, construction supervisor, and entrepreneur. He gave generously of his time to civic and charitable causes. With Carol and their neighbors, he helped start the Jefferson Township Fair — now in its 54th year — and served as president of the township civic league.

For many years, he supported his hero, Willie Nelson, by volunteering at Farm Aid festivals, traveling in his red Dodge Ram truck to help the publicity team. A passionate family history researcher, he traced the Foster family lineage to a Union soldier at the Battle of Cedar Creek in Middletown, VA, and became a valued volunteer at the historic battlefield site.

Ronnie “collected” all kinds of cars over the years, including a retired police cruiser, a hearse, an ambulance, and several bread trucks. He was an ardent student of nature, with a remarkable ability to identify birds and trees and navigate the outdoors without a map. He loved animals of all kinds, especially his little dogs Chia, Kissy, Sophie, and Emmie.

In addition to his wife Carol, Ronnie is survived by his daughters Lori A. Foster of Manassas, VA, and Brenda K. Foster of Manassas Park, VA; his son-in-law David J. Michael and granddaughter Melody K. Michael, both of Manassas Park. He also leaves behind sisters Aneta Farris of Philippi, WV, Patti Dobbins (James) of Simpson, WV, and Edith Starkey (Gary) of Astor, WV; brother Roger Foster (Ethel) of Galloway, WV; and many cherished nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, James R. and Geneva Foster; brothers Roy, Raymond, and Richard Foster; sisters Christine Farris, Elnor Martin, and Carol Sue Marks; brothers-in-law James and Robert Malone; and sister-in-law Betty Ghrist.

Ronnie would be honored by gifts made in his memory to Farm Aid, the link to donate is below. He will rest in the family columbarium at Mount Washington Cemetery, Mercer, PA. Funeral arrangements will be announced at a later date.

farmaid.org/tribute

Tribute Wall

SB

“ *Stefan and Patricia Brooks purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of James Ronald Foster.*



Stefan and Patricia Brooks - May 26, 2025 at 07:34 PM

FF

“ *Uncle Ronnie, you will truly be missed. Thank you for your love of history and family history. Thank you for piecing our family history together. I will miss you at the family reunions more than ever now. I'll miss your stories and just shooting the breeze with you about whatever topic comes up. I can only begin to imagine your reunion with Grandma, Grandad, Dad and all the others. Give everyone my love and until we meet again, don't forget I love you. Thank you for your stories and memories. Thank you for your military service to our great country as well. Rest in Peace, Give everyone a hug for me, but an extra tight squeeze to Dad, Mom and Grandma. Love, Frances J <3*



Frances Foster - May 19, 2025 at 06:47 PM