

ISAAC FREELON WOODLEY

I SAAC FREELON WOODLEY WAS BORN ON JULY 23, 1935, TO JAMES AND IRENE O'REAR WOODLEY. HE WAS THEIR SIXTH CHILD OF

twelve and the fifth boy. There were many uncles, aunts, and cousins, and needless to say, this resulted in many hours of boy games in the woods of Boldo and the Walston Bridge area. These games soon turned to sports when he got to high school and friendly family feuds ensued among the cousins who attended Curry High School and Walker High School.

At six foot three inches, Freelon played football and center position in basketball for Curry. In 1953, the basketball team placed first in Walker County's pre-season tournament. In 1954 and 1955, he received the All County and All State awards in both football and basketball. The basketball team was Fifth District champions in 1954 and Freelon was captain of the basketball team his senior year in 1955.

Freelon married his high school sweetheart, Betty Meeks, in May of 1955, one week after graduation. They moved to Gary, Indiana for a couple of years and then returned home to settle in the Curry area. They have three children, Pam (Porter), Phillip, and Ronda (Schell). They were both active at Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon, and in their children's school activities at Curry. He worked for Gorgas Coal Company in the strip mines for 20 years and managed his small farm at home.

Freelon's passion for sports didn't end with high school and family life. He continued to support Curry games long after his own children had graduated. For decades he carried the marker chains on the sidelines at football games and manned the score time clock at basketball games. He was a fierce University of Alabama football fan and attended March Madness basketball games for many years. He was rarely absent in attending his grandchildren's sporting events as well.

One of Freelon's other gifts included carpentry. He had a keen eye and the ability to "see it" or just show him a photo from a magazine and he could duplicate it. He mostly designed and built the house in which he raised his family, assisted majorly in the construction of his daughter's home, and eventually built a home on Smith Lake. He loved to build and insisted it was done well.

In December of 2009, Freelon passed away after 54 years of marriage to Betty. He is survived by her, his children and their spouses, his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

We often refer to Freelon (Daddy and Grandpa) as the "gentle giant." His kind and gentle words, generosity with his time and abilities, hard work ethics, and so much more keep his memory warm and tender in our hearts.

