



## Robert Michael "Mike" Sifford

September 21, 1938 - May 18, 2026

The staff at Heishman Funeral Home, Inc. send condolences to the family of Robert Michael "Mike" Sifford.

Robert Michael "Mike" Sifford passed from this world to the next on Monday, May 18, while in hospice care in Winchester, Virginia — likely headed somewhere he can still argue politics and drive a zero-turn mower.

He was preceded in death by his brother, David Sifford, and leaves behind his beloved wife of 58 years, Darlyn Pence Sifford; his daughter, Paige Sifford Bilotta (Jason); and grandchildren Joseph Claiborne Bilotta and Audrey Jenielle Bilotta, all of whom loved him dearly despite his unwavering certainty that he was always right.

Mike was born September 21, 1938, in Gastonia, North Carolina, and grew up in Clover, South Carolina, surrounded by a large extended family with enough cousins to fill Bank of America Stadium. Never one to stay still, he hitchhiked west, joined the Air Force, and earned a degree from Fresno State — proving early that planning was optional when determination was involved.

With the heart of an entrepreneur, the hands of a farmer, and the stubbornness of a man who absolutely did not need directions, Mike lived life on his own terms. After moving to Winchester, he met Darlyn, and together they bought a nearly 100-acre farm in Edinburg, Virginia.

As a salesman for American Cyanamid, the family lived in Delaware and Ohio before returning to the farm he loved most. Retirement simply meant he no longer had to pretend to relax. There was always wood to chop, chrysanthemums to tend, tractors to drive for unclear reasons, fence row to pull, and chicken manure to spread with surprising enthusiasm.

When he wasn't working the farm, Mike loved traveling through Europe with Darlyn and friends — especially by train. He was a gifted storyteller who believed embellishment improved accuracy, and while he could be delightfully antagonistic — especially during political debates with his daughter — he loved fiercely, laughed often, and left an impression everywhere he went.

An informal service to celebrate Mike's life will be held Saturday, June 6, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 127 E. High Street, Woodstock, Virginia 22664. Attendees are encouraged to bring good stories, strong opinions, and perhaps a willingness to argue a little in his honor.

# Upcoming Events

## Celebration of Life

JUN 6. 1:00 PM.

Emanuel Lutheran Church  
127 E. High Street  
Woodstock, VA