



## Dr. Deward K. "Dee" Grissom

December 31, 1916 - December 1, 2007

Funeral services for Dr. Deward K. "Dee" Grissom will be held at 2:00 PM Monday, December 3 in the Chapel of Pafford Funeral Home with Rev. Marty Comer officiating. Interment will follow in Lexington Cemetery. Mr. Grissom passed away Saturday, December 1, 2007 in Lexington at the age of 90. He was born December 31, 1916 in the Center Hill community of Henderson County to the late Robert and Bessie Kizer Grissom. His step-mother was Pearlie Davis Grissom. He had four brothers that preceded him in death: Aubrey, Paul, Willard and Clifton Grissom and is survived by one sister, Avel Grissom and several nieces and nephews.

Mr. Grissom attended a one teacher school in Center Hill then attended Junior High in Reagan and high school in Sardis, graduating in 1936. After graduation, he and a friend, Glen Chalk, found their way to Knoxville where they hoped to attend the University of Tennessee. Grissom began working in a drug store where he would remain for years while attending the university. He graduated with a BS in Education with a major in chemistry and a minor in math. He was qualified to teach both elementary and secondary schools. He began to work as a chemist in Alcoa, TN. There he did not find his work satisfying, but his pay was good. He then went to work for Monsanto Chemical Company as a Health Physicist in Oak Ridge. He found his work interesting there, but the exposure to radiation was always a worry.

He was awarded a scholarship for a Master's Degree in Education from the American Association for Progressive Education. He spent one year at a school in Scott County, just outside of Knoxville where he explored ways of teaching science to students in grades kindergarten to high school. Then the US entered WW II. Because of fears of chemical warfare, Grissom, being a chemist was almost immediately called to serve. He was first sent to Maryland where he was reclassified. He was sent to Texas for briefing, then to New Jersey to join the main 67th American Hospital for shipment overseas. After landing in Scotland, they were sent to Taunson, England. His first job was to do standardized lab tests, using American and British dyes. The 67th American Hospital was the last group sent back home after Germany surrendered. While in England, he took some classes at Oxford University and in Paris he took some classes at the University of Paris where he hoped to learn French.

Grissom went back to the University of Tennessee to see Dr. Walker, his former advisor. Walker asked Grissom if he would like to teach at the university. This meeting took place on a Friday and Grissom began teaching on the following Monday. In 1948 he took a leave of absence to enter Columbia University in New York City. After leaving Columbia University, he returned home to Tennessee, but he did not go back into teaching, but became the Senior Public Health Educator with the Gibson County Health Department in Trenton. When the Tennessee Dept of Mental Health was formed, he served as an advisor and the planning and education of

the mental health program. He was sent to Canada as a representative to the World Health Organization. He finished his dissertation in 1952 and received his Ph.D. He then accepted a position with the Southern Illinois University, where he would remain for twenty-three years until his retirement in 1978. While in Illinois he taught to students seeking their Ph.D. He served in a number of associations including the Illinois Society of Public Health of which

he was president. He retired to Oxford, MS for a while until he sold his home there and then moved to Lexington with his sister, Avel Grissom. In Lexington, he became involved with the Little Theater and assisted in many productions.

Deward Grissom, or Dee as he is always called, always set a goal and obtained it. Once he reached that goal, he would set another one. With a great sense of humor, a good heart, and a strong determination, he has made this world a better place.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 2. 4:00 PM - 9:00 PM (CT)

Pafford Funeral Home - Lexington, TN.  
71 Monroe Avenue  
Lexington, TN 38351  
(731) 968-2544  
info@paffordfuneralhome.com  
<http://www.paffordfuneralhome.com>

## Visitation

DEC 3. 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Pafford Funeral Home - Lexington, TN.  
71 Monroe Avenue  
Lexington, TN 38351  
(731) 968-2544  
info@paffordfuneralhome.com  
<http://www.paffordfuneralhome.com>

## Service

DEC 3. 2:00 PM (CT)

Chapel of Pafford Funeral Home - Lexington, TN.  
71 Monroe Avenue  
Lexington, TN

# Tribute Wall



“ Mrs. Grissom,

*I was sorry to hear Mr. Grissom had passed away. I enjoy visiting with him at Mt. Moriah each year. I really enjoyed hearing his life adventures. I was amazed each time I had a chance to visit with him.##imported-begin##Michael Martin##imported-end##*

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December 06, 2007 at 06:32 PM



“ MR DEE WAS A VERY FINE NEIGHBOR. HE LIVED BY US FOR SEVERAL YEARS. A VERY GOOD INDIVIDUAL.##imported-begin##DONALD GARNER##imported-end##

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December 05, 2007 at 04:42 PM



“ I was very sad to see the announcement about Dee's death. He was an inspiration to me and so many others. I first met Dee Grissom as a director of a play at Lexington Little Theater. Dee was a compassionate man who expected people to do their best. He was a very accomplished man, but very accessible. I was so inspired by him in so many ways. His direction in Lexington Little Theater did more for my confidence as a young man than just about anything else. Despite having been educated at some of the country's most prestigious schools, Dee was very much connected to his roots in Henderson County. Time seemed to stand still when visiting him at his antique shop. Every item had a story that was rich in the history of the area. I will always cherish my holiday visits with Dee. At our last visit, he was showing his age both physically and mentally, but still lit up at the sight of a familiar face. Even in his frailty, Dee walked me to my car when I left. He was truly an impressive individual and role model.##imported-begin##Tony Sheppard##imported-end##

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December 05, 2007 at 11:38 AM