



David Godshalk

June 17, 1935 - April 7, 2025

David “Dave” Robbins Godshalk, age 89, died in Hartsville, SC on April 7, 2025 after a lengthy battle with interstitial lung disease, just in time to convince Saint Peter to let him through the Pearly Gates for a heavenly 67th wedding anniversary celebration on April 9 with his beloved wife, Rolfe.

Dave was born on June 17, 1935 in Oak Park, IL to Irene Robbins and Alva Josiah Godshalk. He is survived by children Merrell Foote (John) of Austin, TX; David Godshalk of Seneca, SC; June Newton (Andrew) of Seneca, SC; and Rolfe Olsen (Jim) of Columbia, SC. He is also survived by grandchildren Al Foote of Cincinnati, OH; Cecily Foote of Austin, TX; James Newton of Townville, SC; Thomas Newton of Atlanta, GA; Georgia Olsen of Asheville, NC; James and David Olsen of Columbia, SC; and many nieces and nephews.

After graduating from Downers Grove High School near Chicago, Dave majored in forestry at Colorado State University. While working with the US Forest Service, he met the charming Rolfe Fort, a Texas Tech freshman and Girl Scout counselor at Camp Mary White in New Mexico. The young couple married soon after Dave joined the Army as an intelligence officer, beginning a lifelong adventure that led them to 14 different homes in seven states.

Dave thought being a truck driver might be fun, but much to Rolfe’s relief he

was hired as a sales representative for Sonoco Products Company in Ohio following his military service. Frequent promotions took the growing Godshalk family to California, Tennessee, and ultimately the company's headquarters in Hartsville, SC, where Dave rose to the position of marketing manager for Sonoco's paper division. After a temporary move to Indiana, Dave and Rolfe returned to Hartsville, where he retired in 2002 to enjoy grandkids, traveling, and small-town living.

Dedicated to his community, Dave served as president of Hartsville's Kiwanis Club; president of the town's United Way; board member for the Still Hopes continuing care retirement community in Columbia and the Hartsville Civic Chorale; and governor-appointed member of the Hartsville Community Center Building Commission. His warm bass voice was a welcome addition to the choirs of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, the Hartsville Chamber Ensemble, the Hartsville Civic Chorale, and Hartsville's First Presbyterian Church.

Dave loved fast cars and attending races at the Darlington 500 speedway. He worked through mid-life angst by racing a Hobie 16 at the Pee Dee Sailing Society, taking a race car driver course at Road Atlanta, and acquiring a Datsun 280-ZX, receiving several speeding tickets along the way. He also traveled the globe with his family and was so enchanted by the people and cultures he encountered on the Arabian Peninsula that he wrote a book about his monthlong journey to that unique part of the world.

A Midwestern meat-and-potatoes man who grilled a mean steak, studied the art of smoking barbecue, and roasted the holiday turkeys, Dave's culinary repertoire grew to include a number of specialties from China's Szechuan province. His Grand Duke's Chicken recipe became a family favorite that is now prepared in the kitchens of the Godshalk children and grandchildren. Despite his exotic palate, Dave remained steadfastly opposed to whole wheat

bread and broccoli.

In 2023, Dave moved to The Legacy of Hartsville, where he made many good friends and added bingo and jigsaw puzzles to his daily routine. Thanks to the chauffeuring services of numerous friends, he was also able to continue dining out with the T-Dog dinner club and playing small-stakes poker with his buddies.

The family would like to thank the staff of The Legacy and Crescent Hospice for their loving care and kindness to Dave during his extended illness.

A memorial service will be held on Monday, May 5, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. at First Presbyterian Church, with the Rev. Ashley Cheek officiating. The family will receive friends in the Fellowship Hall immediately following the service.

In lieu of flowers, Dave requested that memorials be made to the Darlington County Humane Society in honor of his favorite rescued canines, Baby Bear and Sargeant Major Woof, or to the First Presbyterian Church Endowment Fund.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

MAY 5. 11:00 AM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church
Hartsville, SC 29550

Tribute Wall

EL

“ *living with Interstitial Lung Disease (ILD) was a daily struggle. I constantly felt out of breath, even while resting. Simple activities like walking to the mailbox or climbing a few stairs left me drained and gasping for air. The medications I was on gave temporary relief, but the side effects made it even harder to cope. In a moment of hope and honesty, exhaustion I decided to try the herbal program from NaturePath Herbal Clinic. At first, I wasn't sure what to expect. But after a few months on the treatment, I began to notice steady improvements. My breathing became less laboured, my coughing reduced, and I felt more energetic throughout the day. What makes this program different is that it's completely natural and gentle on the body, unlike many pharmaceutical treatments I had tried in the past. I didn't experience any negative side effects, and the improvement in my quality of life has been incredible. I've now been on the program for over nine months, and my most recent checkup showed that my condition has stabilized. For a disease that doctors told me had no cure, this was more than I could have hoped for. I feel like I've been given a second chance at life. If you or a loved one is battling ILD and struggling to find relief, I highly encourage you to explore this option. It has truly made a difference in my life. their website is www.naturepathherbalclinic.com*

Elizabeth - July 21, 2025 at 03:03 PM

LA

“ *Hugs and best wishes going forward to the Godshalk family! It's been a long time, but I can still picture us kids playing together back in the day. :-)*

Lisa Hubbard (now Adams) - May 24, 2025 at 04:34 PM

LH

That should have said Lisa Hubbard!

Lisa Hubbard - May 24, 2025 at 04:35 PM

SH

“*David and my husband, Bob Hubbard, had been friends since they were at CSU together. Both majored in forestry. They were great friends and returned to CSU together for reunions. He will be sorely missed.*”

Sharon Hubbard - May 21, 2025 at 01:14 PM

AM

“*Sending up prayers for the entire family.*”



A. McRavin - May 04, 2025 at 06:08 AM

CH

“*Dave and Rolfe were our neighbors for over 25 years and we miss them so much. They made a beautiful home and yard and were so caring to the wildlife and animals that were their pets. Plus they raised some outstanding children. They are missed by many people. Cathy and Jim Hines.*”

Cathy Hines - May 02, 2025 at 07:56 AM

EB

“ Eric, Jo Lynn Bradshaw lit a candle in memory of David Godshalk



Eric, Jo Lynn Bradshaw - April 25, 2025 at 12:03 PM

AJ

“ Dave was a great friend to me and my son
He will be missed



Angel James - April 23, 2025 at 07:46 PM

SM

“ We have known Dave and Rolfe since 1965 when they moved to Newport , Tenn. I helped babysit for the kids when in high school. They were so special to us! We are so very sorry about Dave’s passing. He was a special man that we cared so much for. Our love and prayers go to each child and family during this time. We are so thankful that Dave was in our lives. Ron and Shelia Massey, Newnan, Georgia

Shelia. Massey - April 19, 2025 at 02:27 PM

JM

“ Very sorry to learn of David's passing. In a room of a lot of people, I'd often move toward David. He was smart, insightful and it was easy and enjoyable to talk with him. Part of that "greatest generation" of Sonoco leaders that transformed the company, I believe David contributed fifty years! So well liked and respected because he found the balance between family, friends and work. A life very well lived! I'm keeping David and the family in my prayers.

Jim Morris - April 10, 2025 at 07:21 AM

GO

“ So sorry to hear about David's passing. It's my prayers that God will comfort you in the days ahead.



Grady L O'Neal - April 09, 2025 at 09:45 PM

CB

“ Tom & I got to know your parents when we went to Greece in 2007 & shared a trip a few years later to Italy. We had wonderful times together. Dave was in the poker club with Tom, and those were fun nights! Dave and I also sang in the choir together after they joined FPC. Choir parties with spouses as well as the bell ringers & spouses brought all of us closer together. Dave & Rolfe were both outstanding people, and they will be greatly missed. Our sympathy to all of you. Love, Cecelia & Tom Brown

Cecelia Brown - April 09, 2025 at 08:29 PM

RW

“ Merrell, David, June, and Rolphe:

I loved both of your parents, and grew up around them and all of you. I routinely visited your dad around my visits with Nancy Driggers and Marty McCulloch at Legacy. He was a joy to talk to. Know that Amy and I send all of you love, and it's my intention to attend the May memorial service.

When we worry, we're making our problem our god. Instead, use that same energy to thank God that He's in control. You have a divine connection. God will help you go where you could not go on your own. When you have frustrations, don't be discouraged. That's a sign that you're moving toward the finish line. Whatever challenge or adversity you are facing, the Lord is with you to lead, heal and deliver you (see Ps 46:1). He will supply your need! Have a great day ~ keep moving forward ~ you are ALL loved! God bless you ALL! Trust Him!

Love,

Rev. Andy and Amy Williams

Rev. Andy Williams - April 09, 2025 at 04:24 PM

CB

“ Rolfe + Family: *I enjoyed getting to know Dave at Sonoco and out in the community. I would always try to catch up with him when I would see him out dining with friends. He always had a smile and welcomed the conversation. He will be missed. Sending you and your family love and prayers during this time. Godspeed my friend.*



Caroline Beasley - April 09, 2025 at 02:34 PM

SR

“ It was a pleasure to get to know Dave through the TDOG dinner club. He attended our gatherings regularly and always shared a smile. He will definitely be missed.



Susan D. Reynolds - April 09, 2025 at 01:25 PM