



## Charles Lee Dodson Sr.

May 22, 1936 - June 5, 2026

Charles Lee Dodson, Sr. of St. James, Missouri, was born to Lawrence & Emma Dodson on May 22nd, 1936, in Bonne Terre, Missouri. Charles passed away on Friday, June 5th, 2026, at his daughter's home under hospice care. Charles was united in marriage to the love of his life, Mary, on April 17th, 1959. Together they had many happy years of marriage and were blessed with their children, Leanna (Dodson), Williams and Charles Lee Dodson, Jr. (Chuck)

Charles Jr. and Leanna have taken care of their father for years as he did not want to be placed in a nursing home. They had help, at home, over the last 3 months while he was in hospice.

Charles, Shorty, Charlie, even Chuck was a few of his names that were used over the years. He was born in Bonne Terre, Missouri in 1936 during the depression. He suffered through strep, rheumatic fever with damage to his heart and one lazy eye. He was a tough but fair man with a soft heart. He would give the shirt off his back to anyone; you just did not want to cross him. Leanna, guess' she got that from her dad. Their dad may not have always been affectionate, but he found other ways to show his love and appreciation. Charles only had a sixth-grade education, and he was a self-made man. He worked hard and was never lazy. He provided for his family of four.

Charles was a jack of all trades. He tore down houses for extra money that he made by selling the lumber, bricks, and other items. He built two rooms in their house for the kids to have their own bedrooms. The last house he started to

tear down was where McDonald's is in Rolla. He fell through the roof of that four-story house and fell all the way down to the basement. He went to the chiropractor with a broken back, and the chiropractor would not touch him. He wound up temporarily handicapped due to his back but recovered and was back at work in 30 days. He had thoughts of ending it, but God had a better plan and healed him good as new in 90 days. Charles also cut firewood to help keep his family warm, and that is not an easy task. If you have cut firewood, you know there is nothing harder to do.

Charles was a great shot with firearms, whether a gun, a pistol, a rifle, or a shot gun, he did not miss. Most people did not like to shoot against him, because he was just that good of a shot, even with just one good eye. He once shot a ground hog from over two hundred yards with a 222, as witnessed by Leanna.

Charles also loved to fish, more importantly he loved to hand-fish or noodling, if you know the term. He and his brother, Harold Dodson, Sr., hand fished many waters in Missouri, including the Big River and the Meramec. His brother Harold, over the years, saved Charles, his sister Gladine and even their father, Lawrence, from the unexpected water being too deep. Deep water can have underground secrets which they discovered too late.

Charles also liked to gig frogs and loved eating a good frog leg dinner. One time, he went frog-gigging with his nephew, Harold, Jr. on Dry Fork creek and genuinely enjoyed the time with his nephew.

Charles loved his family and his roots. He went with Leanna, to cemeteries at Bonne Terre at least once a year, to visit the gravestone markers and remember the faces and places of people that had went before him. He was upset sometimes but now he is with those family and friends.

Charles went to church to make mom happy, then in later years he continued to attend church, until it became difficult to attend. Brother Thrasher has prayed with him a lot over the years, to make sure he was saved and would go to heaven and be with his wife, Mary, and the lord.

Charles and Mary promised God they would stop smoking when Leanna

survived a severe kidney infection early in her life. Mary quit when Leanna was five and Charles quit cold turkey when Leanna was seven when he was reminded of that promise. When Chuck (Charles Jr.) was young he had an acute case of German measles, Charles made a promise and agreed with God, to continue his belief and journey with God, if he would save Chuck. Leanna and Chuck have heard their whole lives that their mom and dad were Good People. Charles and Mary were loved and appreciated by everyone. Charles has been lost without Mary since she passed in 2010. He spent the remaining time with his two children and his grandchildren. He enjoyed having his birthday celebration at Country Bob's in St. James, over the last several years. Charles loved Travis' country fried steak.

Charles also spent time with his close friend, and Hank even took him to church occasionally over the years. Charles' health deteriorated with heart attacks, strokes, TIAs, and stents placed. Charles may look gaunt compared to him in the past, but that happens as you age. Charles really mellowed out in his elder years. He was more affectionate to all, and he loved everyone but may not always have shown it.

Charles will be missed. He has left his mark on many people in his life. He always had remarkable stories which all have heard so many times that we have them memorized. He was great with giving people and animals nicknames and had a lot of the little rhymes or stories, such as: "Your hands are cold, cold hands, warm heart, dirty feet, and no sweetheart."

God is getting a good man, and we hope he will finally be at rest with Mary and the Lord in heaven.

Charles is survived by his children, Leanna Williams (Dean) of Rolla, Mo. and Charles Lee Dodson, Jr. of Rolla Mo. His grandchildren, Adam Davis (Leota) of Rolla, Mo, Seth Davis and his significant other, Stephanie Bundy of St. James, Missouri, and Brittany Dodson, as well as his nephews Steve Martin, Denny Martin, and Harold Dodson, Jr., extended family, and friends.

Charles was preceded in death by his wife Mary Dodson, his parents:

Lawrence and Emma Dodson, his brother Harold Dodson, Sr., his sister Gladine Martin, niece Pamela Dodson, nephew, Larry Dodson, and niece Paula Martin.

Pallbearers for Charles will be Harold Dodson Jr. "Butch," Steve Martin, Dennis Martin, Caleb Ayers, D. J. Skaggs, Eddie Skaggs, with honorary pallbearers being, Verona Skaggs (aka Watergirl), L. J. O'Keefe, Baillie Bundy, Phoenix Malichi Davis, and Isiah Williams.

Charles and his family say thank you to all that have known and helped him or his family over the years. Charles would want you to know that you are appreciated and loved.

Memorials in lieu of flowers may be made to Flat Grove Cemetery. Cards are available at all James & Gahr locations.

# Cemetery Details

## Flat Grove Cemetery

Rolla, MO

# Upcoming Events

## Funeral Service

JUN 12. 2:00 AM (CT)

James & Gahr Mortuary - Rolla  
1651 E. Hwy 72  
Rolla, MO 65401  
(573) 458-2262  
jgrolla@hotmail.com  
<https://www.jamesgahrmortuary.com/>

## Visitation

JUN 12. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

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Rolla, MO 65401  
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jgrolla@hotmail.com  
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## Interment

JUN 12 (CT)

Flat Grove Cemetery  
Rolla, MO