

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LOVE OF
Jack M. Miller

July 30, 1941 - December 17, 2025



Jack, affectionately known as Papaw, was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He was generous, intelligent, a passionate history buff, and a mentor to many, both in his personal and professional life. He was a dedicated patriot who instilled his love of country and pride in his service as a US Marine in his children and grandchildren and anyone he met. He enjoyed sharing his life experiences through storytelling whenever he could. All who knew Jack fully expected his signature answer to "How are you?" which was always "Perfect in every way"!



Born Jack Melvin Miller on July 30, 1941, to Milford and Mary (Leisure) Miller in Chillicothe, Ohio, he was their only child. When asked for his date of birth, he would always remark that World War II began six months after he was born.



Jack had many happy memories of his childhood house on Ringwald Street. He fondly remembered growing up in Chillicothe, where his father owned The Tip Restaurant. As an older child, he spent many hours helping his father there at the soda fountain. Sadly, his father passed away at an early age when Jack was just sixteen.



Jack attended elementary school and High School in Chillicothe, where he was a member of the High School Marching Band playing the trumpet. Following graduation, he attended Miami University for two years. After much deliberation, he shifted his priority to practicing his patriotism and enlisted in the US Marine Corps, where he could serve his country and have the opportunity to see the world.



His basic training was conducted in San Diego, after which he was assigned to Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base in Oceanside, California. During his four-year and four-month commitment, he was aboard ship and trained or served in various countries such as South Korea, Japan, Guam, Okinawa, and Taiwan. He and his Marine buddies formed a friendship that lasted a lifetime.



While at home on leave in Columbus, Ohio, visiting his Mother in the summer of 1965, she set him up with a blind date. When he picked her up at her apartment, she opened the door, and he said he had finally met his California Girl.

They spent the night talking and found an instant chemistry. That girl was Jean Ann Duer. She thought he was the most intelligent guy she had ever met. They had a couple more dates before he had to return to Camp Pendleton. Within a month he was granted a leave to return home as his grandmother was ill. It was during that time that Jack proposed marriage to his California Girl, Jean.

They planned a wedding for the following summer, but those plans were modified as Jack learned that he could be called to board ship and head to Vietnam. The conflict there was heating up and everything became uncertain. So Jean loaded up her car and drove to California to be with him. It was then that they learned that Jack was not called to board ship, but was kept at Camp Pendleton to train radio communication operators.

After some swift action and help from Jack's Marine friends, they were married at the Wedding Bell Chapel in San Diego on October 16, 1965. Jack's Commanders generously gave him just three days off to get married!

Following Jack's discharge from the military in 1966, they returned to Columbus, Ohio, to resume educational pursuits. Jack worked in the Real Estate/Builder community, and Jean worked for the IBM Corporation. They purchased their first home in 1968, where they hoped to grow a family.

In January of 1970, they welcomed their first son, Brian. Jack would take Brian on bicycle rides through a nearby park-in a child seat attached to the back of the bike and spend together time on the swings and slides. Lots of play dates occurred with the wonderful neighbors who lived next door. Brian would be an only child for a few more years.





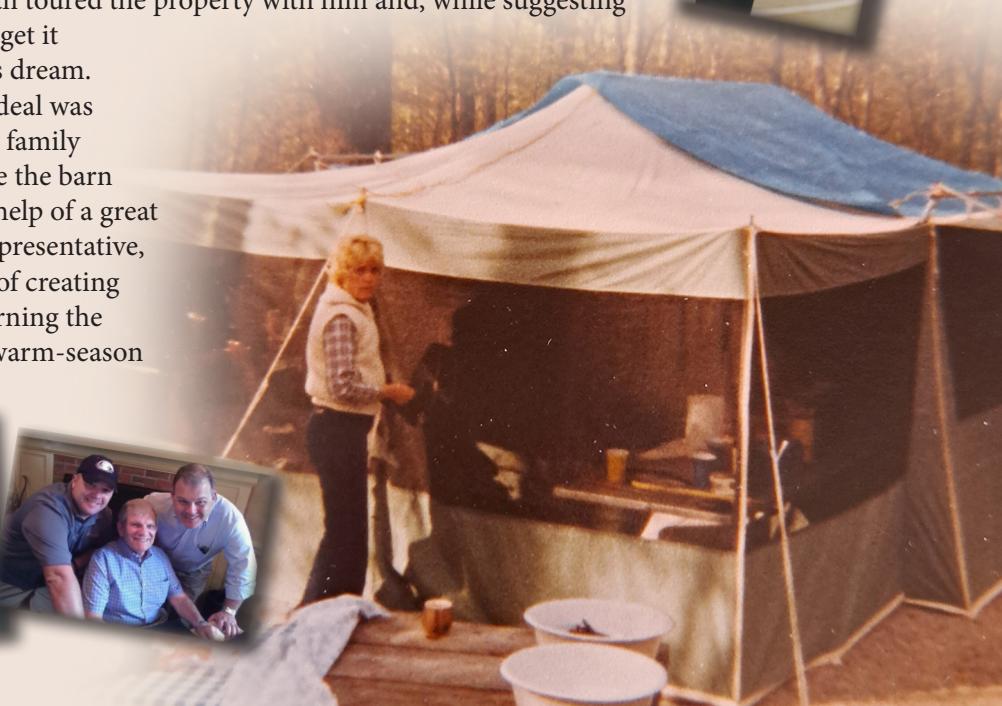
In 1976, Jack responded to an employment ad with a company in Northern Kentucky. He interviewed and was hired as Sales Manager for The Drees Company, which began his multi-decade work in the local building industry and beyond. Jack and Jean both believed in giving back to the industry through service in many forms. Jack's many years of dedication were recognized with numerous awards.



Not long after moving his small family from Columbus to Northern Kentucky, Jack and Jean welcomed their second son, Adam, making their family complete. Thus began a life of boy stuff! Soccer, Little League Baseball, some football, and lots and lots of music.

As the boys grew, so did their activities. Jack attended as many of those events as possible. His love of all things outdoors led to the purchase of a fishing boat and tent which provided many weekends of water sports. After a few years, it was natural to advance to a larger boat and a more spacious tent. And not long after that, a small camper for more comfort. Many summers were spent on Laurel Lake teaching the boys how to ski and continuing their camping and fishing experiences. Years later, the boys graduated from High School and began their college life. Things were about to change.

Jack always had a vision and desire to own property in the country where the family could gather and learn to value the land. After months of searching through listings, he found a place in Owen County that appeared to match what he had imagined. Jean toured the property with him and, while suggesting it required lots of work to get it livable, agreed to fulfill his dream. In September of 2000 the deal was complete. Everyone in the family pitched in to help renovate the barn and house. Jack, with the help of a great US Dept of Agriculture representative, began his years-long task of creating a wildlife habitat and returning the open spaces to primitive warm-season grasses and clover.



In the meantime, the boys were getting married, and by 2002, we were blessed with our first grandchild. Before long, the grandchild boom began. In a span of 10 years, we were blessed even more with a total of 8 grandchildren. The family quickly outgrew that farmhouse. So Jack designed a new lodge to accommodate the growing family. It was the perfect place for gatherings of all kinds. Many happy times were spent there celebrating Easter, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving. And, of course, hunting seasons for turkey and deer. The grandchildren learned so much and had great moments of joy, even though they were required to also be weekend work warriors.



The country neighbors were kind and generous and kept watch over things when we were not there. To show his appreciation, Jack began providing 4th of July fireworks and invited everyone to join us on the big porch as the men in the family assembled and orchestrated a perfect fireworks show. He continued to improve the display and for 14 years carried out his mission of gratitude.

Jack was proud that he could provide the perfect gathering place for family and friends. But above all, he was proud of his boys and grandchildren. We didn't have daughters to raise, so when five granddaughters arrived, he was over the moon. There were few if any Miller boys to carry on his family name until the three boys followed the girls' arrival. He never stopped talking about all of them and would have been thrilled to see them every day. He followed every one of their activities, and if he couldn't be there in person, he was always there in spirit.



After retiring from his professional career, Jack hoped to spend even more time at the farm, perfecting the beauty he had created there. But, after a few years, the long journey of memory loss had begun and was taking its toll on his abilities. He could no longer care for and use all the farm equipment in a safe manner. So, he spent his time sitting on the wonderful porch and observing the beautiful land he so admired. It brought him peace and tranquility at a time of great mental confusion.

No story about Papaw Jack would be complete without mentioning his faithful sidekick, Max. Max was a high-energy, intelligent, and loving German Short-haired Pointer. They were inseparable. They rode around the farm together with Max leading the way in front of any of the vehicles. They spent quality time together on the porch just pondering the view. At the primary residence, Max was always by his side. They simply loved one another. It was as if their hearts were one.

After caring for Jack at home for 4+ years, Jean could no longer provide the care he so richly deserved and needed. He was placed in a loving memory care facility in the summer of 2025, where he passed peacefully, surrounded by his beloved family, on December 17, 2025.





