



# VAN SEXTON

AUG 19, 1930 - DEC 2, 2025



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# **VAN SEXTON**

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**P**ERRY –

Sexton, Ralph Van, age 95, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, leaving a legacy of love and friendship. A family service will be held later in his hometown of Creswell, North Carolina. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Make A Wish Foundation, 1702 E. Highland Ave., Suite 400, Phoenix, AZ 85016, or Friends of Perry Animal Shelter, FOPAS, 204 Kellwood Drive, Perry, GA 31069.

Van grew up on a farm in Creswell, North Carolina, where he starred as a baseball pitcher and fell in love with his life-long partner, Mitzi Phelps. Together, they forged a loving bond that was admired by all. Van was a talented baseball player and was signed by the Brooklyn Dodgers to a professional contract at the young age of 17. On his tryout in New York City, Hall-of-Famers Roy Campanella caught, and Jackie Robinson batted. Branch Rickey signed him on the spot, and he immediately went to spring training in Florida. It was truly a magical moment for young Van. As his baseball career progressed, Mitzi was always at his side. In 1951, Van was drafted into the United States Army. He married Mitzi before leaving for Alabama where he served with the 47th Viking Infantry Division. After the Army, Van continued his baseball career in the Pittsburgh Pirates organization, pitching for the Shelby Clippers.

With a growing family, Van transitioned to a career in construction. His drive and pursuit of perfection defined his career with Fluor Daniel International where he rose to Project Manager, building large projects, including Duke Power (North Carolina), Phillip Morris and the Federal Reserve Bank (Virginia), Proctor & Gamble and Northrup-Grumman (Georgia), Dixie Cup (Maryland), Kimberly-Clark (Alabama), and Shell Oil (Illinois).

Van was a Mason at Lodge #53, a Shriner, and a member of the American Legion Post 391, all in North Carolina. He attended First Baptist Church of Perry and was a member of the Patterson Sunday School Class. During retirement years, Van enjoyed traveling with Mitzi to spend time with family spread across the country, fishing with Mitzi, and golfing with his “Kottie Kooter” group in Perry.



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Van was preceded in death by his parents, Ralph and Dezzie Sexton; a son, Greg Sexton; his daughter, Bettina Sexton Scholar; and a great-grandson, Titus Houghtaling.

Left to cherish the memories they made with Van are his loving and devoted wife of 74 years, Mitzi Sexton of Perry; his sons, Jeff Sexton (Bonnie) of Perry, and Derick Sexton (Debbie) of Virginia; his grandchildren, Ryan Sexton (Stephanie), Ciara Houghtaling (Ryan), Adam Sexton, Jamie Sexton (Sarah), and Gregory Sexton; numerous great-grandchildren, all of whom he loved dearly; and his faithful and beloved fur baby, Big Red.

Condolences for the family may be left in the online guestbook at [www.watsonhunt.com](http://www.watsonhunt.com). Watson-Hunt Funeral Home has been entrusted with the arrangements.



## Tribute Wall

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SL

**Shelia Laws** lit a candle in honor of VAN.

December 11 at 10:14 AM



BR

**Beau Robb** posted:

My condolences to you and the family. So many fond memories of you both. My mother Linda sends her deepest condolences as well! ❤️

December 7 at 3:10 PM

SL

**Skeeter, Peggy Elder & Vickie Lafon** sent a European Sympathy Dish Garden to the SEXTON family.

December 7 at 10:00 AM



SL

**Skeeter, Peggy Elder & Vickie Lafon** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of VAN.

December 7 at 10:00 AM



RR

**Ronald Robb** posted:

God bless to all the Sexton family, I have so many great memories. Love to all.

December 7 at 5:10 AM

GB

**Gayle And Brandon Borah** posted:

Our thoughts and prayers are with all of you. Gayle and Brandon Borah

December 6 at 6:08 PM



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**Bubba** posted:

Prayers for Mitzi, family and friends. Lord provide each and everyone the peace and comfort only You can provide. Van was an easy going guy, a pleasure to be around.

December 6 at 4:41 PM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring VAN by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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