



Mr. George Pierson Kappler Jr.

August 17, 1946 - March 22, 2026

George Pierson Kappler, Jr.

Local manufacturer, entrepreneur and civic leader George Kappler never minded being the center of attention and enjoyed his well-earned reputation as a storyteller. Privately he was quiet and reflective – he loved to find joy and humor in the everyday moments of people and animals. He always sought to leave the place he lived, worked and called his adopted home better than he found it. With this unique combination of traits, he was successful on all counts and gifted his family, friends and employees with a true legacy. After a long illness he passed away peacefully March 22 surrounded by family.

George Pierson Kappler, Jr. was born August 17, 1946, in Vicksburg, Mississippi to George Pierson Kappler, Sr. and Kathleen Taylor Kappler. He would later be joined by his sister, Susan. The family had brief stints in different locations and ultimately settled where George called home in Port Gibson, Mississippi. Many people helped shape his life, including his grandmother who disciplined him with peach tree switches and spoiled him with sugar cubes.

After graduating high school in Port Gibson he went to Mississippi State University where he would become a forever-Bulldog.

At Mississippi State George entered the ROTC program to help pay for school while he earned his Bachelor of Science in chemistry in 1969. After college, he entered the army as a Second Lieutenant. Before leaving for his first overseas assignment, George attended a party where he saw a beautiful

young lady and gathered the courage to deliver his infamous pick-up line “One day I am going to marry you.” Her response, a quick slap in the face, did not deter him, and after a three-month courtship George and Nancy Gale Norman were married on January 3, 1970.

George and Gale spent their first two years of married life in Germany where he got to “drive tanks through the town” and they explored Europe. In March of 1972 George was honorably discharged with the rank of Captain and they made their way back to the states where he had to figure out what to do with his life and how to support his family. He took a drive to Guntersville to interview with Monsanto. While driving into town seeing the water and mountains for the first time, he decided that even if he did not get the job THIS is where he wanted to call home and raise a family.

Fortunately, George got the Monsanto job, and the family bought their first house on Guntersville’s Forest Drive. However, George soon realized he wanted to work for himself and not someone else. With a mix of young naivete, and a lot of stubbornness and luck, George set out with only one plan in mind, to be his own boss.

He pieced together work as a teacher and at his father-in-law’s screw company while the beginnings of his own business started to take shape. Founded April 1, 1976, with six sewing machines and eight employees, Kappler Development Company started business as a contract manufacturer sewing disposable coveralls made of DuPont Tyvek fabric. From those humble beginnings, Kappler grew to become a global leader in protective fabrics and garments for hazmat response and other dangerous work. With almost 30 successful patents, today’s Kappler, Inc. is recognized as the innovator that redefined protective clothing worldwide.

Even with the success of the company, George found joy with the simple things and surrounding himself with nature. Once, a customer visiting Kappler complimented the gardener hard at work on the company grounds, noting that he really seemed to care about the facilities. The customer was surprised when the “gardener” turned out to be the owner of the company.

George's love for nature and land is evident today, with the Japanese cherry trees that bloom every spring at the Kappler campus and elsewhere in Guntersville.

Ever since George was a boy, he had a goal in life to own land. He had said, "I don't want to own all the land. Just the land that touches mine." This motivation reflected the desire to preserve the beauty around him. He was proud to call himself a member of the Alabama Treasure Forest Association as well as a member of the Alabama Forest Owners Association, and to be certified with the Alabama Tree Service. He enjoyed creating a haven for all things wild and enjoyed watching sunrises and sunsets and exploring the land he acquired which he named Wildhaven. George's love for the outdoors also led him to persuade friends to join his quest to hike long sections of the Appalachian trail and to take river cruises to Chattanooga on the Tennessee River.

His affinity for the outdoors was matched by the love George had for people. He found great satisfaction and meaning in his work and knowing he was helping people who were risking their lives for others. He also loved giving back to the community, with many local causes quietly supported by George and Gale's generosity.

George Kappler accomplished much in his life, but his greatest accomplishment is his legacy of leaving something better than you find it. That will continue through his surviving family members wife, Gale Kappler, two daughters: Laura Kay Kappler-Roberts (Patrick Roberts) and Jessica Marie Kappler Hamilton (Mark Hamilton) and his five grandsons: George Jacob Roberts, Joseph Thomas Roberts, James Wallace Hamilton, Silas Peter Alexander Hamilton, and Charles Thatcher Hamilton. He is survived by his sister, Susan Kappler Hoover (James), seven nieces and nephews, as well as a special canine friend, Mason.

Although George was colorblind, or maybe BECAUSE he was colorblind,

George loved bright colors. Feel free to join the family in honoring George by wearing bright colors for his Celebration of Life service.

The Celebration of Life service will be Tuesday, March 31, 2026, 4:00pm at the Marshall County RSVP building at 19272 Hwy. 431 North, Guntersville AL 35976. The family will receive friends and family from 2:00pm until time of service. Carr Funeral Home directing.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions to the Guntersville Historical Society, Tigers for Tomorrow, Second Chance Animal Shelter, or a local charity of your choice.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 31. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

Marshall County RSVP
19272 US-431
Guntersville, AL 35976

Celebration of Life Service

MAR 31. 4:00 PM (CT)

Marshall County RSVP
19272 US-431
Guntersville, AL 35976

Tribute Wall

JC

“ Janna C. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. George Pierson Kappler Jr..

Janna C. - March 31 at 02:11 PM

VL

“ Mr. George Kappler is a true pioneer in our industry and a most respected elder.

I will forever cherish the wisdom and the vision he shared with me during our 2019 visit—especially his profound beliefs on doing what is right and his unwavering commitment to justice in product integrity, business, and personal character.

He was a man of his word and a mentor I deeply admire; I am forever grateful for his kindness and guidance, and he will always have my deepest respect.

Vinson Liu - March 30 at 07:57 AM

JH

“ I don't know where to begin to describe the major heart felt loss that I have for a gracious man I met in February 2014 to perform a prescribed burn at Wildhaven Tree Farm that continues to this day. He was a sweet man that had a strong desire to manage his property economically for resulting positive environmental impacts. I pray for peace and comfort for his wife, family, and especially the little pet dog that loved him dearly.

Jesse Horton - March 28 at 06:56 PM

SS

“ Sue & Andy Steele purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Mr. George Pierson Kappler Jr..



Sue & Andy Steele - March 27 at 11:28 PM



“ Rainbow Of Remembrance Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. George Pierson Kappler Jr..



March 27 at 12:28 PM

DC

“ DT Cores & Company purchased the Forever Our Angel Bouquet for the family of Mr. George Pierson Kappler Jr..



DT Cores & Company - March 26 at 08:28 PM

DC

“ DT Cores & Company planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. George Pierson Kappler Jr..

DT Cores & Company - March 26 at 08:28 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mr. George Pierson Kappler Jr..

March 26 at 10:32 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of Mr. George Pierson Kappler Jr..



March 26 at 10:32 AM



“ *My condolences to the Kappler family. George was a very down to earth person always with a smile in his face... loved by many... I enjoyed and had the privileged in working with him. Entrepreneur Icon in Industry. RIP.*

Hiram Gomez - March 26 at 10:22 AM



“ *Thomas & Vinson from Rite Safety purchased the Serenity Wreath for the family of Mr. George Pierson Kappler Jr..*



Thomas & Vinson from Rite Safety - March 26 at 09:33 AM

SH

“ As a kid, George already showed a strong interest in chemistry. Armed with his now infamous 1950's chemistry set, he set up a chemistry lab in Grandma's basement. Yes, he had her permission and yes there were some incidents but nothing of serious consequence.

Susan Hover - March 25 at 07:38 PM

JS

“ George built cutting edge empire which is still thriving today after 50 years. It was a pleasure to work with/for him!. Condolences to his family and everyone he had a touch! He will be missed.

John Studzinski

John Studzinski - March 25 at 10:19 AM

PF

“ Plata family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mr. George Pierson Kappler Jr..

Plata family - March 25 at 10:18 AM

PF

“ Plata family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Mr. George Pierson Kappler Jr..



Plata family - March 25 at 10:18 AM



“ Rainbow Of Remembrance Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. George Pierson Kappler Jr..



March 25 at 09:43 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mr. George Pierson Kappler Jr..

March 25 at 09:43 AM