



## Joseph Melton Glisson

January 6, 1948 - August 2, 2020

With his devoted wife by his side, Joe passed away quietly on Sunday August 2. An Alabama native, Joe was born in Montgomery and grew up in Tuscaloosa. As a kid, Joe fell in love the woods and always found great solace in nature especially after losing his maternal grandfather and mentor at 14. After HS, Joe briefly attended college, joined the Air Force before an injury cut his service short, and worked several jobs. On a whim, Joe applied to be a police officer for the City of Tuscaloosa. He was hired, and it changed his life. While serving, Joe returned to college and earned a Bachelor of Social Work degree from University of Alabama, where he served as president of the social work student organization and worked for social reform within the university. He then received a Master's Degree with a double major (Criminal Justice and Education) from Wichita State followed by teaching at Southeast Missouri State (SEMO), where Joe created the criminal justice degree program and began his doctoral studies at Southern Illinois University (SIU). His SEMO students gave him a plaque to express their gratitude for his mentorship. His doctoral studies continued first on campus, then while teaching at Illinois State, then while working in the Governor's Office in Hawaii. He returned to SIU to finish his pH D in Higher Education and remarried after meeting the love of his life, Jackie Turner. He then bought a 100-year old general store next to the national forest. There he led a small group of citizens to form the Regional Association of Concerned Environmentalists (RACE) to stop the Cave Valley Timber Sale on the national

forest in an ecological sensitive avian area near the store. RACE stopped the timber sale and saved Cave Valley. They went on to have a significant impact on management of the Shawnee National Forest. Joe was able to sue the government as a private citizen on behalf of the environment. He litigated before the US District Court for the Southern District of Illinois and US Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit in Chicago. A retired US District Judge credited Joe with teaching him about the environment. District federal clerks told him that he wrote better legal briefs than most lawyers. After Joe sold the store, he and Jackie found themselves living next to a threatened stream. Joe sued a local city to stop their attempts to dam a nearby state-designated biologically significant stream that was home to a threatened fish and an endangered crawfish. Joe's case went all the way to the Illinois Supreme Court. Although he did not prevail, the stream still flows today. After many years in Southern Illinois, Joe and Jackie moved to Florida. Joe became aware of the threat to Wakulla Springs from the City of Tallahassee's spray field facility. He sued the City of Tallahassee to hold them to account for their impact on Wakulla Springs and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for permitting the city to allow the impact to continue. The Florida Wildlife Federation, Wakulla County and the Florida Attorney General joined Joe's lawsuit that resulted in an agreement that the city immediately broke. However, they did take actions to reduce their nitrogen output, which in turn reduced the nitrogen level at the spring. Like most folks, Joe became an environmentalist because a place he loved was threatened. Once he found his legal niche, Joe dedicated his life to holding governments to account for their responsibility to protect the natural world. He was a good man and a loyal friend. Those who loved him feel incredibly fortunate to have known him. He was a devoted husband, who supported his wife's professional development. He and Jackie deeply loved one another and had an incredible life together. He was a highly intelligent man, who used his talents and abilities to help others and defend the natural world. He intended to write his book "From Street Cop to Tree Hugger." Unfortunately, he did not take the

time to write about himself. Joe is survived by his wife, Jackie Turner, his son Joseph Aldridge, grandchildren, Samantha and Will Aldridge, his brother, Charles Glisson (Joyce Feld) and nephew and niece, Matt and Erin Glisson. Joe was cremated by Bevis Funeral Home in Crawfordville. There will be no funeral service. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date both in Florida at Wakulla Springs State Park and in Southern Illinois on the Shawnee National Forest. In lieu of flowers please send donations to Big Bend Hospice or Shriners Hospitals for Children.

Todd Wahlquist and Kimberly Crum with Bevis Funeral Home of Crawfordville are assisting the family with arrangements. (850-926-3333, [www.bevisfh.com](http://www.bevisfh.com))

# Tribute Wall

CL

“ At he top of my credential list, it will always read; Known Associate of Joseph Glisson, P.H.D. I had the great privilege of having Joe as a friend for 42 years, and the aggravation. But I wouldn't have missed it for the world. Now we must go on without him. It seems an end of an era to me, that is the impact Joe had on this world. A warrior without fear, undaunted by stacked odds he persevered without despairing and we will never know the extent of his efforts to protect the places we love and need .

*His sense of humor sustains me during the difficult time of his passing on. I will always treasure our many escapades, truly some of the best memories of my life. Witnessing Joe in the courtroom litigating against multiple Forest Service attorneys will remain etched in my mind and inspire me to keep putting up the good fight. I would never be able to compile the volume of knowledge which came my way through knowing Joe. I will always miss you, Joe. Wherever you are a light will shine.*

---

**Corina Lang** - August 25, 2020 at 09:34 AM



“ Joe was a huge supporter of myself and the students at Carbondale New School, when the students wrote to Senator Paul Simon (who met Joe and us at the Pomona General Store) and we "toured" a clear cut with the senator. A true environmentalist.

---

**Barry Scanlan** - August 24, 2020 at 07:03 PM