
Herbert J. Tassin Jr.

Herbert J. Tassin Jr., 83, of Nashville, TN, died peacefully, surrounded by his loving wife and sons, on Thursday, November 13th, 2014, at St. Thomas Hospital, Nashville, TN, of complications due to cardiac arrest. Herb was born in Arabi, LA, on June 8, 1931, to Bernadette and Herbert J. Tassin Sr. Growing up in Westwego, LA, Herb began his lifelong passion for music at age 13, when he purchased his first trumpet. Initially self-taught, he soon began playing jobs at the Westwego Fireman's Hall. A talented athlete, Herb was drafted into baseball's Minor Leagues at age 16, playing for teams including the Albuquerque Dukes (where his batting prowess earned him numerous free home-run steak dinners). Stationed in Hawaii during the Korean War, Herb played in the Army Band, and learned to surf. Upon returning home, he attended SLU, where he met his future wife, Donna Rae Watts. He received a Bachelor in Music Ed from SLU (and later a Masters from LSU), and he and Donna were married on August 22, 1959. Herb was a

schoolteacher, and also achieved success as one of New Orleans leading bandleaders with the Herb Tassin Orchestra for over thirty years, playing for everyone from Presidents to Broadway Shows, Mardi Gras Balls, conventions and weddings, and was the conductor at the Fairmont Hotel's Blue Room for many years. He loved making the music that made people dance, and treasured the friendship of his fellow musicians. Herb and Donna relocated to Nashville, TN, in 2010 to be closer to their sons, and he continued playing music until his passing. Herb is survived by his loving wife, Donna, sons Joel, Jeff and wife Sandy, and Herb III, his cherished grandson Zachary, and numerous nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his parents, brothers Bob and Jeane, and sister JoAnne. A private family memorial service in Nashville is planned.

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