

Dolly Parton's Heartbreaking News on Husband of 60 Years: 'He Was a God-Send'

Dolly Parton's husband of 60 years, who avoided the spotlight in her lifelong career and served as the inspiration behind her timeless song "Jolene," has died.

Carl Dean passed away Monday in Nashville, Tennessee, Parton's publicist confirmed.

Parton also posted a short statement on Instagram on Monday.

"Carl and I spent many wonderful years together," she said in the statement. "Words can't do justice to the love we shared for over 60 years. Thank you for your prayers and sympathy."

– Dolly Parton (@DollyParton) March 4, 2025

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Dean will be laid to rest in a private ceremony with immediate family attending, she added. The family has requested privacy at this time.

Their love story began 62 years ago when they met outside a Wishy Washy Laundromat.

Parton was 18 years old and had just moved to Nashville.

"I was surprised and delighted that while he talked to me, he looked at my face (a rare thing for me)," Parton described the meeting. "He seemed to be genuinely interested in finding out who I was and what I was about."

Two years later and against the advice of her record label, Parton and Dean snuck across state lines to Georgia and got married in a small ceremony in Ringgold on Memorial Day. They hoped to keep the news out of the Tennessee newspapers.

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Parton told CBN News in a 2016 interview that her husband was a “God-send.”

“I think my husband and my relationship was just really a God-send,” Parton said. “God knew I was going to need somebody like him if I was going to be doing all this crazy stuff.”

“But He knew he (Carl) was going to need somebody like me because Carl is pretty much a loner and he really doesn’t want to be with anybody but me,” she added.

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