

*The Arkansas 8 in 10.... the Execution of Jack Jones  
Through the eyes of a family friend*

*By Etta Blankenship*



An "EXECUTION ALERT" poster from the Arkansas Ministry of the Death Penalty. The poster features a logo in the top left corner with the text "MINISTRY OF THE DEATH PENALTY". The main heading is "EXECUTION ALERT" in red. Below it, the text reads "Arkansas plans to execute 8 men in the span of 10 days." The poster lists eight men to be executed, arranged in two rows. The first row shows four men: Bruce Ward (April 17), Don Davis (April 17), Stacey Johnson (April 20), and Ledell Lee (April 20). The second row shows four men: Jack Jones (April 24), Marcel Williams (April 24), Kenneth Williams (April 27), and Jason McGehee (April 27). At the bottom, the poster provides contact information: "Call Governor Asa Hutchinson at (501) 682-2345 to voice your opposition to state killing."

*In 1988, I began my career as a criminal defense investigator at the Office of the Public Defender for Judicial District 15-B, which served both Chatham and Orange Counties in North Carolina. Part of my work in that position involved investigating capital cases. In 1999, I was hired by the newly formed Office of the Capital Defender in Durham, North Carolina, as the state's first Capital Defender Investigator. There, my focus turned specifically to mitigation and fact investigations in capital cases throughout North Carolina. In 2003, I obtained my private investigator's license and ventured into private practice, continuing to focus on capital cases. In 2010, I was selected to be a consultant with the Trial Resource Unit within the Office of the Capital Defender to assist in capital case consultations. I continue to carry a full caseload of pretrial capital cases in private practice in addition to consulting with defense teams across the state as part of my work with the Trial Resource Unit. I have been involved in hundreds of murder cases, and to date, none of my clients are on death row. I am currently working on the post-conviction cases of two death row inmates. God has given me a heart filled with compassion for those less fortunate, and I truly feel called to do capital defense work.*

Jack Harold Jones, Jr. was born on August 10, 1964, in Toledo, Ohio. When he was born, his mother already had three other children from previous relationships. In February 1966, Jack's younger sister, Lynn, was born. Jack and Lynn have the same parents. As a teenager, Jack was diagnosed with antisocial personality and bipolar disorder. Jack self-medicated with alcohol and drugs. During his troubled years, Jack was involuntarily admitted to a psychiatric facility and attempted suicide on two occasions. In early 1995, Jack was again admitted to a mental hospital but was discharged six days later.

On June 6, 1995, Jack killed Mary Phillips and attempted to kill her daughter, Lacy, in Bald Knob, Arkansas. While Jack was awaiting trial in the county jail, he was finally given the proper medication to treat his mental illness. Jack was extremely remorseful for his actions and could not believe what he had done.

Jack's case involved a perfect storm of horrible facts, an uncooperative defendant's family, and a defense team that was not experienced enough to handle a case of this magnitude. Virtually no fact or mitigation investigation was conducted. There was no plea offer, and the case was put on a fast track through the court system. Only nine months passed between Jack's arrest and his conviction. In North Carolina, capital cases generally take between two and five years from the defendant's arrest to trial, which allows the defense team to thoroughly investigate the facts of the alleged crime and the client's entire background.

On April 17, 1996, a jury sentenced Jack to death. Jack told his attorneys he did not want to pursue any appeals—he wanted to die for what he had done and felt like he deserved to. Over the next twenty years, several execution dates were set but each time a stay was issued.

In 2013, I met Jack's little sister, Lynn, and our families have since become very close friends. As our relationship grew, Lynn began to trust me enough to share that she had a brother on death row. Lynn told me she had never felt comfortable talking about Jack or their childhood because she felt like no one would understand what they had experienced growing up. After meeting me, she soon realized that my work involved interviewing capital defendants and their families on a daily basis.

Lynn never approved of or condoned her brother's actions; rather, she agonized over the facts of Jack's case and truly felt sorry for the Phillips family. She wanted so desperately to reach out to them and apologize. When Jack's trial attorney contacted the Jones family, Lynn's father told them they were not to speak to the defense team and were not to testify at his trial. Jack's attorneys did not try very hard to reach the family once rejected. After Jack received his death sentence, Lynn was tormented even more.

Lynn loved her brother and vowed to support him until his death. She was the only family member who reached out to Jack after his conviction and remained a part of his life. Lynn and I began talking on a regular basis about Jack and their horrific childhood. Lynn was finally able to release the emotional trauma and damage that had been deeply hidden for years.

In early 2017, the State of Arkansas realized that one of the drugs it uses to perform executions would expire at the end of April. The governor set an unprecedented number of executions: eight in ten days. Jack's execution was one of two set for Monday, April 24.

As the date approached, Lynn begged the head of the Arkansas Department of Corrections to allow her to be present during the execution. She wanted Jack to know there would be someone on the

other side of that two-way glass who loved and supported him while he took his last breath. Lynn respected that the Phillips family would also be present but she wanted a space for herself.

After her request was denied, Lynn began investigating how other states handle this issue. She soon realized that Arkansas was one of the few states that did not allow the defendant's family to be present during the execution. Most states have separate viewing rooms. The media became aware of Lynn's quest and ran a news report about her pleas to the Arkansas Department of Corrections to change their policy. When asked for comment by reporters, the agency's administrators declined.

Lynn continued to plead with the warden. Finally, on the day before the execution, Lynn was told that she could be in an office at the prison but she would not be permitted to see Jack. The prison administrators would not allow me to be with her inside the prison, so she declined their offer.

The prison warden told Lynn that from Wednesday, April 19 through Sunday, April 23, she could visit Jack each afternoon from 1:00-4:00 p.m. She was not allowed to see Jack the day of his execution. Lynn departed Raleigh-Durham International Airport for Arkansas very early Wednesday morning, but due to bad weather and flight delays, it took her more than fifteen hours to get from Raleigh to Little Rock. Unfortunately, because of those delays, she missed the first scheduled visit. Lynn was able to see Jack on Thursday at 1:00 p.m., and the prison allowed her to purchase snacks from their vending machine for Jack to eat while they reminisced. Jack loved Dr. Pepper soda, Butterfinger candy bars, and beef jerky.

On Thursday night, after visiting Jack, Lynn attended a vigil during the execution of Don Davis. The vigil was held by other anti-death penalty advocates and family members of other condemned inmates in the horse pasture outside the prison. This was a horrifying experience for Lynn. She

described to me how, as she stood in that field, she felt so isolated and alone. The grim reality of the situation fell upon her: Jack was going to die, and there was nothing she could do about it.

Lynn's family was struggling with both financial difficulties as well as medical issues, which did not allow them to be with her in Arkansas. Lynn never asked me to accompany her—she was willing to experience the horrendous ordeal by herself. As both a capital investigator and a friend, however, I could not let Lynn go through her brother's execution alone. In my heart, I felt that God had brought our families together for a time like this, so on Sunday, April 23, I flew to Arkansas. Despite my years of experience in the world of death penalty litigation, I was not prepared for the emotional rollercoaster I was about to experience in Arkansas. This was different. This was personal.

Lynn picked me up from the airport, and when she saw me I remember how tightly she held onto me. Lynn was so thankful to see a friendly face in this surreal environment. We left the airport, took my luggage to the hotel, and then drove to the remote, isolated area of Varner, Arkansas, to the Cummins Prison Unit. Once the car was searched by prison guards and allowed to proceed into the prison parking lot, we parked on the left side of the visitation building. This allowed me to watch Lynn as she walked into the building where Jack was waiting. I wondered what she was thinking. I wondered what Jack was thinking. It would be the last time she passed through those gates—the last time she would ever have a conversation with Jack, the last time she would ever hear his voice, the last time she would ever hug or kiss him, and the last time she would tell her brother that she loved him.

I waited anxiously in the car during her visit. I kept watching the clock and the prison unit door that she had entered through. I was trying to prepare myself emotionally for what to expect when she came back through those prison gates. A few minutes after 4:00 p.m., I saw Lynn exit the prison

and watched her as she headed back towards the visitation guard station. She was a broken woman. I got out of the car and met her inside the building. When Lynn saw me approaching her, she fell into my arms and wept uncontrollably. Everyone in that building knew who she was and why she was there. No one said a word while I stood there trying to console her. Once Lynn was able to regain her composure, we returned to the car.

As we sat in the car, Lynn began to describe her emotional visit with Jack. While she was talking, something to my left caught my eye. I turned and noticed several guards bringing Jack out of the building where they had just visited. Due to complications with diabetes, Jack 's leg had been partially amputated and he was confined to a wheelchair. As they rolled Jack to the next building, he had a huge grin on his face and was staring at the grass. He glanced over at the car, but I am not sure he realized Lynn was in the passenger seat. Lynn cried tears of joy as she watched Jack's precious face. She explained that during their visits this week, Jack had told her how he missed walking barefoot in the grass like they had done as kids. He also missed ice and grapes. Small and simple things that we take for granted each day. We watched as he was escorted into the next building and the door closed behind him. That would be the last time Lynn would see her brother alive.

We left the prison and headed down the lonely country road back to Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Lynn was deep in thought and sobbed quietly as I drove. Pine Bluff was the closest town that had restaurants and hotels. We tried to eat supper but neither of us had an appetite, so we just picked at our food. Lynn admitted to me that she had not eaten much while she had been in Arkansas. Since leaving Raleigh, she had felt sick to her stomach, had suffered headaches, had not had a normal bowel movement, and had not slept much.

Lynn did not want Jack to be cremated in his white prison jumpsuit, so after dinner, we went to Wal-Mart and wandered aimlessly around the store. What do you buy someone for a cremation after being executed? While walking around the men's clothing section, I noticed a rack of t-shirts. One shirt had a Dr. Pepper decal. It was perfect for Jack! Lynn loved it and decided to get that and a pair of blue shorts. She also planned to have some family photos cremated with Jack. We went back to the hotel and tossed and turned throughout the night. As I lay quietly in my bed, I tried to imagine what she was going through her mind knowing that tomorrow the State of Arkansas was going to kill her brother.

On Monday, April 24, we stayed in the room for most of the morning. I tried to talk about various topics, but Jack's impending execution was like an elephant in the room. It was a beautiful, sunny and warm day, so we decided to get outside and enjoy the sunshine. We drove around the town, with no particular destination in mind.

When the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) learned about the mass executions scheduled in Arkansas, they sent a crew to cover the events. As part of their documentary, the BBC would be featuring four of the cases, and Jack's was one of them. A Ukrainian reporter named Miles had been assigned to Jack's case. Miles had interviewed Lynn as well as the Phillips family during his stay in Arkansas. On Monday afternoon, Miles met Lynn for another feature at a local nature trail. The topics that day would include her faith and how she was handling the stress of the situation. He and Lynn talked as they walked down a beautiful path into the woods that led to a creek. The setting was very serene and peaceful. Lynn said Jack would have loved it.

After the interview, Miles rode with us to the area outside the Varner Unit to wait for the execution. The prison did not allow media, protestors, or defendants' families near the Cummins Unit. Varner

is another prison unit located beside Cummins. The Arkansas State Police and the Arkansas Department of Corrections had set up a roadside checkpoint as one entered the area. Officers would stop approaching vehicles and ask the occupants who they were and why they were there. If the officers permitted entry, the vehicle was sent to the next station to be searched.

We were directed to park on the right side of the road beside a horse pasture. We could see both the Varner and Cummins Units in the distance. We arrived around 5:00 p.m. and were waiting for Marcel Williams's execution, which was scheduled to begin at 7:00 p.m. Jack's would follow.

Law enforcement officers had roped off a small area on one side of the pasture for "pro" death penalty advocates and another area for the anti-death penalty protestors. I had explained to the officers at the first checkpoint that we were neither—we were Jack Jones's family. Since Lynn had been in the taped area for the protestors on Thursday for the execution of Don Davis, she told me she could not emotionally handle being in that same area tonight. She described how on Thursday night, everyone was desperately looking at social media for the latest information from the news media that had been allowed inside the prison. Lynn did not want to learn about her brother's death via a tweet.

About 30–45 minutes after we arrived, I learned from Abe Bonewitz, a representative of the Death Penalty Action group, that Jack's execution had been moved up and would to be the first one at 7:00 p.m. When I told Lynn, she became very anxious and started pacing. I wanted to take her away from the crowd, so we sat in the car. Lynn's desire was to create a "private bubble" just for us to pray, read scripture, and sing during the execution. She wanted to worship our true and faithful God. Our only option in this remote and isolated area was to stay in the car.

Around 6:30 p.m., Lynn became very anxious and told me she felt nauseated. She began to sweat and rock back and forth while tightly clinging to pictures of her and Jack. The prison staff had taken pictures of them each day during their visits, which Jack could purchase through his canteen. A man on the death watch had to purchase pictures with his family. Unbelievable!

At approximately 6:50 p.m., two men approached the car and introduced themselves as prison chaplains from the Varner Unit. They were there at the request of the head chaplain of the Cummins Unit, who had ask them to be present to tell Lynn when Jack had died. The Cummins chaplain was inside the prison and would be present for the execution. He had spoken with Lynn for several years and worked as a liaison of sorts between Lynn and Jack, making sure all the correct forms and papers were signed. He advised the two men that he would text them, and they would relay the message of the execution to Lynn. He did not want Lynn to hear it on social media.

Lynn had previously told me that on Thursday night, when the execution of Don Davis began, the Death Penalty Action group rang a bell for two minutes while they read a statement. She did not want to hear that sound tonight, and I promised her I would make sure she did not. Lynn asked me to sing "Amazing Grace" during the execution.

As the 7 o'clock hour neared, Lynn wept even more as she clung to and kissed the pictures of Jack. She rocked back and forth in her seat as she told Jack how much she loved him and how he had always been a good big brother, always trying his best to protect her. She played Psalms 38 from the Bible app on her phone. She had read this scripture to Jack many, many times. During the 7 o'clock hour, there were times when Lynn became so overwhelmed with emotion that she felt like she was going to throw up.

While we were in the car, I played “WholeTones” music from my phone to calm her down and to drown out the sound of the bell as it began to chime. I placed my phone to her ear and began to pray and then sing. Because of the heightened emotion, I could not remember the verses to “Amazing Grace,” so I kept repeating the first verse. When I finished singing, one of the chaplains prayed.

The next thirty minutes felt like an eternity. I had my phone on vibrate and had created a group text with Lynn’s husband, daughter, son, and sister. They were all at their respective homes watching the live media accounts, following Twitter, and texting me. I had my phone hidden from Lynn, but she was in no shape to read or to comprehend anything. Lynn continued to shake uncontrollably as she wept while rocking back and forth.

As the minutes slowly crept by with no word from the chaplain, Lynn began to panic that something was wrong. She again felt like she was going to throw up. She screamed that she knew something was wrong, she could feel it. “Why was it taking so long?” She cried as she clung to his pictures and begged Jack to go. “Please let go. I love you, please go.” She started to hyperventilate and rocked even faster in her seat as she sobbed and begged Jack to go. “Please let go!”

I was able to make eye contact with the chaplains who had not yet received any official word from the Cummins chaplain. Lynn continued to moan and weep. Around 7:25 p.m., I got a text from Lynn’s sister, Joy, that the media was reporting that Jack had died peacefully at 7:20 p.m. There was still no confirmation from the chaplains in the car with us. In an effort to calm Lynn down, I showed her the text from Joy. She began to relax a little but then cried even harder as she realized he was dead.

At that time, both chaplains got out of the car and went over to the law enforcement command center. They came back to the car and at 7:33 p.m., they officially told Lynn that Jack had died at 7:20 p.m. Later, we found out that the Cummins chaplain had called Lynn's cell phone from inside the prison to personally tell her, but because of bad cell reception, she did not get the call. It had gone straight to voicemail, and she finally got the notice once we were on our way back to the hotel. It was also because of bad cell reception that the chaplains in the car with us did not receive their texts.

I was still monitoring the family group texts as they expressed how the media was reporting that Jack had suffered and that Marcel Williams's attorney had quickly filed a motion to halt the execution and a temporary stay had been issued by the governor. Williams was to be executed right after Jack. The family asked me not to share these reports with Lynn until the information had been confirmed, and I agreed.

Lynn was starting to breathe easier. Once she regained her composure, we got out of the car and walked towards the other people in the pasture area. Abe called me to the side to show me a text he had received about the media reporting that Jack's execution had been botched. Whoever sent the text to Abe knew Lynn and specifically advised him not to tell her about this unconfirmed report. Abe and I agreed not to tell Lynn.

Lynn told me that Jack had made her promise that after his death, she would walk around and personally thank all the law enforcement and media on his behalf. He wanted her to apologize to them because, as he saw it, they were having to work that evening because of his actions.

From my experience with law enforcement, I knew they would be on guard and resistant to people approaching them while an execution was taking place. The command center was not the best place to start, so I suggested that Lynn start with the officers at the second checkpoint. We had already spoken with them during the car search, so I felt like they would be more receptive to Lynn's approach. In honor of Jack, Lynn took her shoes off and walked barefoot in the grass. As we began to approach the checkpoint, one officer noticed us and cautiously walked towards us. When he asked if he could help her, Lynn reached out her hand and took his. With tears streaming down her face, Lynn told the officer that she was Jack's sister and that Jack had asked her to thank him for being there and to apologize to him for having to come out tonight because of Jack's actions. I could tell by the look on the officer's face that he was shocked as he accepted her apology. She shook the hands of the other two officers at that checkpoint and then asked if she could go over to the command center. One of the officers told her she could, and we headed in that direction.

I looked out of the corner of my eye as we walked away to see one of the officers giving the thumbs up to the officers at the command center ahead. They needed to know she was coming in peace. There were about twenty officers from various agencies posted at the command center. With tears in her eyes and a soft, trembling voice, Lynn shook each officer's hand and repeated the same message. One of the helicopter pilots for the Arkansas State Police in the receiving line had heard Lynn's message as she went down the line and took his hat off before he shook her hand and accepted her apology. *(That was a truly amazing moment for me because Lynn had finally been treated with some dignity and respect in this horrible situation.)*

Lynn then walked over to the first checkpoint to thank each officer. As she headed towards them, one of the chaplains who sat in the car with us approached me. He had been watching Lynn and asked me what she was doing. I told him about the promise Lynn made to Jack. The chaplain's eyes

swelled with tears as he said to me, "That's classy." After she spoke to every officer on scene, Lynn headed towards the media area to fulfill her promise.

During all of this, I continued to monitor the conflicting reports about the temporary stay of Williams's execution from the family group message. We all remained in agreement that I would not say anything to Lynn about the reports until it had been confirmed.

After Lynn completed all of her thank yous and apologies, she told me she did not think she could handle hearing the bell toll when Marcel Williams's execution began. She did not want to stay any longer. Lynn was so lost in all the emotions that she had no idea what time it was, how long it had been since Jack's death, or even that Marcel's execution had not started. I told her we could leave anytime, and she decided she wanted to go back to the hotel. We said goodbye to Miles and got back in the car.

I cranked the car and was about to drive away when Lynn's cellphone rang. Lynn loudly screamed as she spoke, then immediately jumped out of the car and starting pacing quickly up and down the roadway. A reporter had called her to get a reaction to the reports that Jack's execution had been botched. When Lynn hung up the phone, she was shaking and grabbed me. She was hysterical, crying and screaming: "They lied to me! They lied to me, he suffered, I knew it! I knew it, I felt it!" She collapsed into my arms and wept uncontrollably as we stood in the middle of the dark highway. It took all my strength to hold her up as she went limp in my arms. I struggled to remain standing and feared we would tumble to the ground.

Everyone in the area (media, spectators, and officers) came running towards her when they realized Lynn had just found out about the conflicting reports. She was quivering and trembling as

she sobbed. Finally, a news reporter came over to us and, with tears in his eyes, began to whisper. He told us that one of his coworkers, who had witnessed the execution, was coming live at 10:00 p.m. to report on what she had seen. The reports of the botched execution were unclear and incomplete. We were told that Jack suffered, but no one could really say what happened. One report said he was gasping and struggling for air in his last moments, but there was no information beyond that. We waited for the report with great anticipation.

With her cell phone grasped tightly in her hand and tears streaming down her face, Lynn stood shaking in the middle of the roadway as we watched the live report. That reporter said that she had been present in the prison for Jack's execution and that in her opinion, he had not suffered, that it seemed peaceful. As Lynn heard those words, she felt faint. She was so overwhelmed with emotion that she wept in relief. Once she was able to gather her emotions, Lynn thanked the reporter for being kind enough to tell her about the upcoming news report.

While Lynn and I were watching the live report, she did not realize that Marcel's execution had begun and that the bell had tolled. Lynn was totally exhausted and needed to leave. We again said our goodbyes and began the thirty-minute drive back to the hotel on what was now an even darker and lonelier road. Once back at the hotel, neither one of us could sleep, so we stayed up and packed our bags in preparation of our flight home.

The warden had told Lynn to be at the prison at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday to pick up Jack's personal items. We arrived promptly and told the guard why we were there. She was not expecting us, so she asked us to wait while she made a few phone calls. Over the next hour as we anxiously waited, Lynn watched one inmate being arrested on another charge. She cried quietly and said she felt sad for him. She quickly said a prayer that he would get his life together. She also watched two other

inmates being released from prison to go home. The first inmate was released into the arms of a loving mother whom he kissed and hugged. As the second inmate passed by Lynn, with tears in her eyes, she reached out her hand and said to him, "Good luck." He smiled back as he walked outside to the open arms of a loved one. With tears streaming down her face, Lynn watched as they drove away. She quietly uttered, "And my brother left here in a hearse."

Another inmate, who had been working in the visitation building the entire time we had been there, finally came up to Lynn and asked if she was Jack's sister. When she said yes, he told her that Jack was a good guy and that he liked Jack a lot. She smiled and thanked him. In a rude tone, one of the guards told that inmate to move on.

Finally, I saw the property cart being wheeled down the sidewalk towards the visitation building. Lynn was again overcome with emotion and fell onto me sobbing as she saw three cardboard boxes being rolled in with "Jones" written on the side. She was trembling, crying, and mumbling, "My brother lived for fifty-two years and all I have of him now are these three boxes." The guard needed her to sign the property release form, but she was so overcome with emotion that her hands were shaking too much to sign the form. Lynn had to find her license to complete the form because she could not remember her home address. As her tears dripped onto the form, that same polite inmate brought a paper towel over so she could wipe her tears. Once the forms were finally signed, the inmate and two guards walked outside with us and loaded the three boxes onto the back seat of the car. At that time, they were all very respectful and polite to Lynn as we said goodbye. As we drove out of the prison gates for the last time, Lynn sighed in disbelief at the events of the past few days.

We then headed to Little Rock to meet with the crematorium staff. It was Lynn's desire to have a private viewing of Jack's body, but when we arrived, the staff informed her that the medical

examiner's office had not yet released Jack's body. She did not know when they would receive it, so Lynn would have to leave the clothes and photographs to be cremated with Jack. The staff member told Lynn that some additional paperwork was needed before they could do the cremation. It was Lynn's understanding that the chaplain at Cummins had previously gotten Jack to sign all the required forms. Lynn had to call the chaplain on his cell phone.

The chaplain was on his way to work and told Lynn he had already been debating whether to call her. He had been hesitant to reach out to her because he did not know what state of mind she would be in and he did not want to upset her any further by calling. He told Lynn how upsetting it had been to him as he watched the news media film her on the roadway as she learned of the reports of a botched execution. The chaplain told Lynn that he could not sleep last night because he was so bothered at how she had been treated by the prison during this whole ordeal and he apologized to her. I could hear the chaplain's voice and could tell he was very emotional.

As we sat in the conference room of the crematorium, the chaplain spoke gently to Lynn, reassuring her that he believed Jack had not suffered. Lynn cried quietly as she listened. The chaplain told Lynn that Jack had apologized to the victim's family, the media, and the witnesses. The media had turned off the microphone just before Jack had apologized to the medical staff that had to inject the lethal drugs. None of the witnesses heard what Jack said and apparently mistook him speaking to the medical staff for struggling and gasping for air.

The chaplain also told Lynn that after the Williams execution had been completed, he drove over to the law enforcement command center to check on the officers. The Major told him how Lynn had gone over to shake their hands and apologize to them and called her a class act. The chaplain told Lynn that it did not surprise him because that's the Lynn he had gotten to know through the years.

Lynn continued to sob quietly as he spoke to her and she thanked him for telling her. The chaplain would email the additional forms the crematorium needed. With tears streaming down her face, the staff member hugged Lynn and promised her that she would say a prayer over Jack's body before they cremated him. Once available, Jack's ashes would be shipped to Lynn. Lynn hugged and thanked her as we left the building.

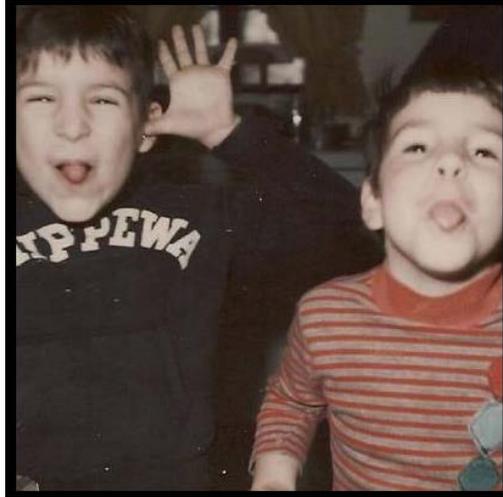
The last errand we had to complete was to find a UPS store to ship Jack's belongings back to Lynn's house in North Carolina. As we carried the three prison boxes inside, Lynn asked the store employees if they had a table and large trash can we could use. The staff was very gracious and provided exactly what we needed. They informed us that the prison boxes were not sturdy enough to ship, so Lynn would have to sort through his belongings there to determine what she would throw away and what she wanted to ship in new boxes.

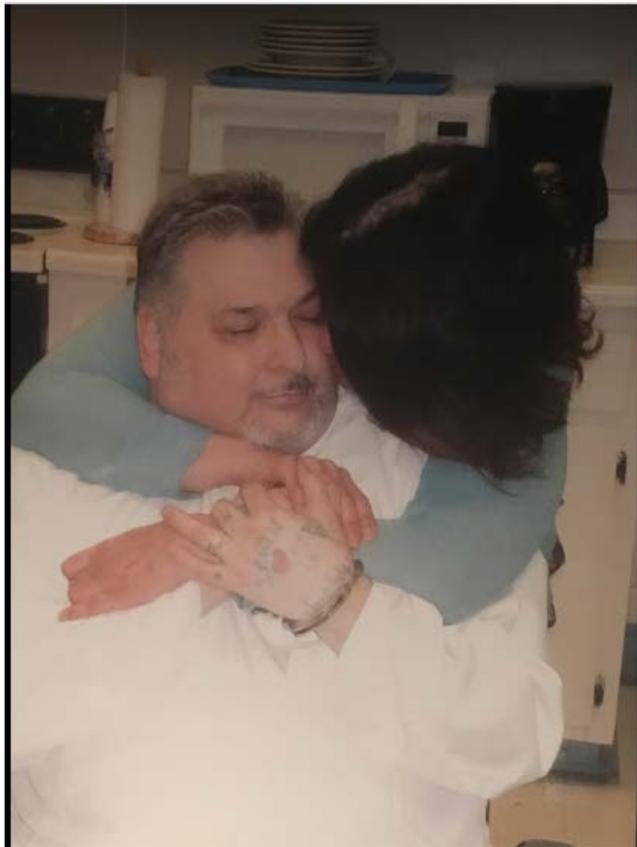
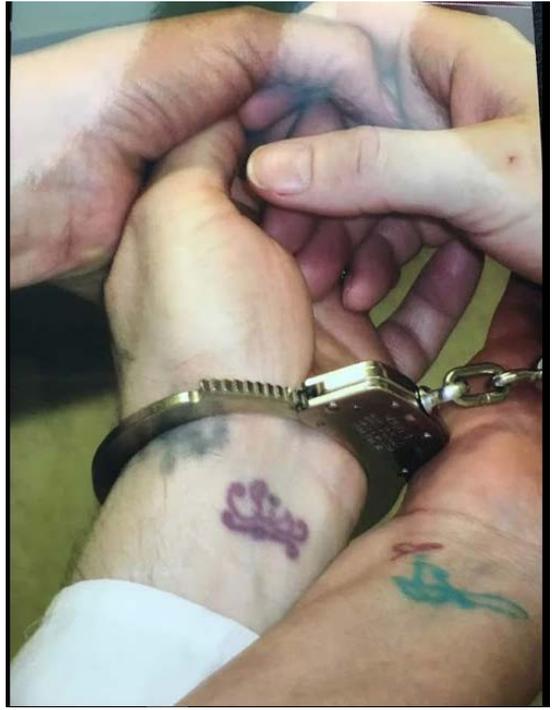
As Lynn opened one box, she smiled as she fussed about the leftover canteen that Jack had not shared with the other death row inmates. She laughed and she cried as she looked at some of his personal items: the cup and bowl Jack used for coffee and meals, his hairbrush, his eyeglasses, and the ink pen he used to write her. She thumbed through some of the books that she had ordered for him over the years. She sighed, "Oh, Jack", when she found the penciled picture of a topless woman that he had drawn. Jack was an amazing artist. Lynn has some of his beautiful painted artwork hanging in her home. We finished going through his personal effects, shipped the new boxes, and headed to the airport. It was time for Lynn to put Arkansas behind her and begin the process of healing. Lynn is now on a mission to make good come out of this tragedy. She wants to share her story in hopes that it could help other families with have loved ones charged with capital murder.

*For me, this trip to Arkansas has been both heart-wrenching and life-changing. The actions of Jack Jones adversely affected two families who have had to deal with their own suffering. Neither side asked for this suffering, but nevertheless, it is real and personal. In these situations, pain has no boundaries. It spreads in the hearts of loved ones on both sides. Families are innocent and should always be treated with dignity and compassion.*

*Her interaction with the system made it clear to Lynn that defendants' families have no voice and don't matter. The treatment Lynn experienced has had a profound effect on me and has inspired me to be a strong voice between the defense team, the defendant's family, and the system. I hope this story of a loving sister and her desire to be with her brother until the end of his life will capture the hearts of others and help foster more compassionate treatment of family members by treating them with the sympathy and respect they deserve. They are victims too.*

*"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40*







## Death Penalty Photography Documentary Project

7 hrs · 🌐

While the execution in Arkansas was underway tonight, Lynn Scott, the sister of the next man scheduled in 4 days, wipes away tears, while Judy Robison-Johnson, the wife of the man whose execution was stayed tonight, stands by her side in a field outside the prison.





## STATEMENT OF JACK JONES

I WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW THAT WHEN I CAME TO PRISON I MADE UP MY MIND THAT I WOULD BE A BETTER PERSON WHEN I LEFT THAN WHEN I CAME IN.

I HAD NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT I WOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO DO THIS. I'D LIKE TO THINK THAT I'VE ACCOMPLISHED THIS.

I MADE EVERY EFFORT TO BE A GOOD PERSON — I PRACTICED BUDDHISM AND STUDIED PHYSICS. I MET THE RIGHT PEOPLE AND DID THE RIGHT THINGS.

THERE ARE NO WORDS THAT WOULD FULLY EXPRESS MY REMORSE FOR THE PAIN THAT I CAUSED.

7:04: Curtain opens

7:04-7:06 Last words from Jack Jones

7:06 Mics are turned off

7:06 Eyes closed, lips moving, stopped moving by 7:07

7:07 ADC use tongue depressor

7:11 First consciousness check, chest moving from breathing

7:12 Rubbing sternum

7:13 No movement

7:17 Another consciousness check

7:18 ADC medical staff member uses stethoscope

7:19 Corner is called, uses stethoscope

7:20 Jack Jones pronounced dead





# EXECUTED



## JACK JONES

- 1995 MURDER OF 34-YEAR-OLD MARY PHILLIPS & BEATING 11-YEAR-OLD LACY
- 1996 CONVICTED OF CAPITAL MURDER
- SENTENCED TO DEATH BY LETHAL INJECTION

# Arkansas Democrat Gazette

ARKANSAS' NEWSPAPER

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## In the news

**Kim Fehon**, a detective in Broken Hill, Australia, said a 7-year-old boy took the family car in an attempt to drive 500 miles from Port Macquarie on the east coast to Perth on the west coast and traveled about 800 miles before being stopped by police in a remote mining town because of a damaged bumper.

**Meghan Alt**, 27, of Irvine, Ill., a former winner of the Miss Orange County beauty pageant, was sentenced to 300 days in jail and three years of probation after pleading guilty to possessing child pornography and lewd acts with a child, prosecutors said.

**Christine Higbee**, 45, sw jokes that if she ever needs another kidney, she always get one from one of her seven children after donating one of her kidneys. Zac Pacyna, 26, a co-worker at a building-supply store in Venice, Fla., diagnosed with a rare kidney disease.

**Lynnece Washington**, a Broken County, Ala., prosecutor called it a "senseless act of fraying over a cell-phone" after two Midfield men were fatally shot by a third person during an argument that became "something that never should have happened."

**Dudley Dewling** of Loring Heights in Northwest Atlanta said she and her neighbors were installing more security cameras and sending packages elsewhere after a man

# 2 killers executed hours apart



Inmates Marcel Williams and Jack Jones were put to death Monday night at the Cummins prison in the nation's first double execution in a day since 2000.

ERIC BESSON, LISA HAMMERSLY AND JOHN MORITZ  
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

**GRADY** — In the nation's first double execution since 2000, Arkansas delivered heart-stopping doses of lethal drugs Monday night to death-row inmates Jack Jones Jr., 52, and Marcel Williams, 46.

Jones was pronounced dead at 7:20 p.m., 14 minutes after the execution began, prison officials said.

The convicted murderer moved his lips for about two minutes after the first drug entered his body at 7:06 p.m., according to witness Andrew DeMillo of The Associated Press. It wasn't clear whether the inmate was trying to speak, because the chamber microphone was turned off after his final statement, DeMillo said.

Jones' consciousness was checked at 7:11 p.m., and his chest rose and fell until about 7:13 p.m., DeMillo said.

Officials don't administer the second and third drugs in the three-drug injection process until the inmate is determined to be unconscious.

In interviews afterward, DeMillo and two news media witnesses reported no obvious signs of suffering. See **EXECUTION**, Page 6A



# STATE OF ARKANSAS

## ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH Vital Records CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

FILE NUMBER 2017020989



3 2 7 1 8 1 7 0 1

1. DECEDENT'S LEGAL NAME (Include AKA's if any) (First, Middle, Last, Suffix) <b>JACK HAROLD JONES, JR</b>		2. SEX <b>MALE</b>	3a. DATE OF DEATH <b>APR. 24, 2017</b>	3b. TIME OF DEATH <b>UNKNOWN</b>
4. SOCIAL SECURITY NO. <b>294-74-2179</b>	5a. AGE - Last Birthday (Years) <b>52</b>	5b. UNDER 1 YEAR Months: _____ Days: _____	5c. UNDER 1 DAY Hours: _____ Minutes: _____	6. DATE OF BIRTH <b>AUGUST 10, 1964</b>
7a. RESIDENCE STATE OR FOREIGN COUNTRY <b>NORTH CAROLINA</b>		7b. COUNTY <b>WAKE</b>	7c. CITY OR TOWN <b>APEX</b>	
8d. NUMBER AND STREET [REDACTED]		8e. APT. NO.	8f. ZIP CODE <b>27502-4777</b>	8g. INSIDE CITY LIMITS? <b>YES</b>
9. EVER IN US ARMED FORCES? <b>NO</b>	10. MARITAL STATUS AT TIME OF DEATH <b>DIVORCED (NOT REMARRIED)</b>		11. SURVIVING SPOUSE'S NAME (If wife, give name prior to first marriage.)	
12a. IF DEATH OCCURRED IN A HOSPITAL		12b. IF DEATH OCCURRED SOMEWHERE OTHER THAN A HOSPITAL <b>CUMMINS UNIT</b>		12c. COUNTY OF DEATH <b>LINCOLN</b>
12d. FACILITY NAME (If not institution, give number & street) <b>CUMMINS UNIT - ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</b>		12e. CITY OR TOWN <b>GRADY</b>		12f. ZIP CODE <b>71644-0500</b>
13. FATHER'S NAME (First, Middle, Last) <b>JACK HAROLD JONES, SR</b>		14. MOTHER'S NAME PRIOR TO FIRST MARRIAGE (First, Middle, Last) <b>DOROTHY JEAN BLAIR</b>		
15a. INFORMANT'S NAME <b>SHERALYN SCOTT</b>		15b. RELATIONSHIP TO DECEDENT <b>SISTER</b>	15c. MAILING ADDRESS (Number and Street or PO Box, City, State, Zip Code) [REDACTED]	
16a. METHOD OF DISPOSITION: <b>CREMATION</b>				
16b. PLACE OF DISPOSITION (Name of cemetery, crematory, other place) <b>NORTH LITTLE ROCK FUNERAL HOME AND CREMATION, INC.</b>		16c. LOCATION (CITY, TOWN, AND STATE) <b>North Little Rock, ARKANSAS</b>		
17a. EMBALMER'S NAME <b>NOT EMBALMED</b>		17b. EMBALMER'S LICENSE #	17c. SIGNATURE (FUNERAL SERVICE LICENSEE OR OTHER AGENT) <i>/s/ CHRISTA E MCELHANEY</i>	
17d. NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS OF FUNERAL FACILITY <b>ARKANSAS CREMATIONS 201 N IZARD, LITTLE ROCK, AR, 72201</b>				17e. LICENSE # <b>532</b>
18a. DATE PRONOUNCED DEAD <b>APR. 24, 2017</b>	18b. TIME PRONOUNCED DEAD <b>07:20 PM</b>	18c. NAME AND TITLE OF PERSON PRONOUNCING DEATH (PRINT / TYPE) <b>JAMES HAWKINS, CORONER</b>		19. WAS MEDICAL EXAMINER OR CORONER CONTACTED? <b>YES</b>
20. PART I. Enter the chain of events - diseases, injuries, or complications that directly caused the death. DO NOT enter terminal events such as cardiac arrest, respiratory arrest, or ventricular fibrillation without showing the etiology. DO NOT ABBREVIATE. Enter only one cause on a line. <b>IMMEDIATE CAUSE (Final disease or condition resulting in death) → a. LETHAL INJECTION</b> <small>Due to (or as a consequence of)</small> b. _____ <small>Due to (or as a consequence of)</small> c. _____ <small>Due to (or as a consequence of)</small> d. _____ Sequentially list conditions, if any, leading to the cause listed on line a. Enter the UNDERLYING CAUSE (disease or injury that initiated the events resulting in death) LAST.				APPROXIMATE INTERVAL: Onset to Death <b>UNKNOWN</b>
PART II. Enter other significant conditions contributing to death but not resulting in the underlying cause given in PART I.				21a. WAS AN AUTOPSY PERFORMED? <b>YES</b>
				21b. WERE AUTOPSY FINDINGS AVAILABLE TO COMPLETE THE CAUSE OF DEATH? <b>YES</b>
22. MANNER OF DEATH <b>Pursuant to a judicial sentence of Death - Execution</b>				
23. DID TOBACCO USE CONTRIBUTE TO DEATH? <b>NO</b>		24. IF FEMALE:		
25a. DATE OF INJURY (Mo/Day/Yr) <b>04/24/2017</b>	25b. TIME OF INJURY <b>07:20 PM</b>	25c. PLACE OF INJURY (e.g. Decedent's home, construction site, restaurant, wooded area) <b>CORRECTIONAL FACILITY</b>		25d. INJURY AT WORK? <b>NO</b>
25e. LOCATION OF INJURY: (Number, Street, Apartment No., City, State, Zip Code) <b>CUMMINS UNIT(ADC GRADY, AR</b>				
25f. DESCRIBE HOW INJURY OCCURRED: <b>SUBJECT ADMINISTERED MIDAZOLAM, VECURONIUM BROMIDE AND POTASSIUM CHLORIDE.</b>				25g. IF TRANSPORTATION INJURY, SPECIFY
26a. CERTIFIER (Check only one): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Examiner: On the basis of examination, and/or investigation, in my opinion, death occurred at the time, date, and place, and due to the cause(s) and manner stated.				
SIGNATURE: <i>/s/ STEPHEN A ERICKSON</i>		TITLE: <b>DEPUTY CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER</b>	DATE: <b>APRIL 28, 2017</b>	
26b. NAME AND COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS OF PERSON SIGNING ITEM 26a. (Type / Print) <b>STEPHEN A ERICKSON, DEPUTY CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER 3 NATURAL RESOURCES DR, LITTLE ROCK, AR, 72205</b>				26c. LICENSE # <b>C-7689</b>
27a. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRAR <i>Shirley Louie</i>				27b. FOR REGISTRAR ONLY - DATE FILED <b>SEP. 14, 2017</b>

To Be Completed / Verified by FUNERAL DIRECTOR

To Be Completed / Verified by MEDICAL CERTIFIER

+ DENOTES AMENDED ITEMS:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE IS A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE ON FILE IN THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.



*Shirley Louie*  
Shirley Louie  
State Registrar

**5699527**  
**5699527**

**SEP 26 2017**

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