



## Dana Skelton

December 7, 2025

To watch the LIVESTREAM, click the link below:

<https://player.memoryshare.com/video/dana-skelton-terrell-tx>

Dana William Skelton was born July 6, 1949 in Clarksdale, Mississippi. He passed away December 7, 2025 in Dallas, Texas.

Preceding him in death were his parents Billy Skelton and wife Jane, Marion Skelton, and brother Bob Waller.

Left to cherish his memory is his loving wife of nearly 54 years, Sherry Skelton of Terrell, Texas; daughter Laura O'Donnell and husband John of Frederick, Maryland; son Will Skelton and wife Corrinne of Highland Village, Texas; grandchildren Juliana, William and Elizabeth Foster, Claire and Jack Skelton, and step-grandchildren Joshua and Faith O'Donnell; sibling: Deborah Skelton of Jackson, Mississippi, as well as many other beloved family members, friends, coworkers, and former students.

After graduating from The University of Southern Mississippi, Dana married the love of his life, Sherry Edwards, in 1971. He served as a band director for eleven years at Forrest County Agricultural School and Jackson Preparatory School all while keeping up his trumpet chops by performing with the Jackson

Symphony Orchestra, various ballet, opera, and Broadway Musical companies, and as a freelance musician playing live concerts featuring national touring artists such as Elvis Presley and James Brown. It was during these years that Dana and Sherry had their two children: Laura in 1977, and Will in 1979.

Dana earned his Masters in Music Education at Mississippi College and became the high school band director of the Fighting Tiger Band in Terrell, Texas in 1982. Together with his colleagues, Dana established a culture of hard work and personal responsibility by stressing qualities of outstanding leadership and the commitment to achieving shared goals. The band went on to win its first UIL Superior and Sweepstakes rating in the ensuing years.

In 2000, Dana was named Terrell Independent School District Fine Arts and District Projects Director and worked alongside Claycomb Architects to design the Performing Arts Center. He was pleased to serve as the school liaison for the Terrell ISD Excellence Foundation. As a civic-minded man, Dana organized and worked in partnership with many volunteers to establish the E! Terrell Entertainment Series, bringing musical performances to the students and community of Terrell, Texas.

Most importantly, Dana was a dedicated family man. It was important to him that his family spend quality time together. He organized family vacations that were both fun and educational. He loved taking his wife, children and later grandchildren to Disney World, Branson, Civil War Battlefields and Pigeon Forge. In his later years, he and Sherry (both being history buffs) took many more trips touring historical sites, visiting the homes of famous authors, and their favorite - a long-awaited trip to New England to see the fall foliage. He was a proud father and grandfather and delighted in seeing them all use their God given talents. Dana loved taking his family to musicals at Fair Park, to Braums to celebrate special occasions, and was always ready for a game of

chess.

As a steadfast member of First Christian Church of Terrell for 36 years, Dana served as a deacon and elder. He valued his church family and was a faithful man of God. Dana knew he was headed for heaven and even said repeatedly during his last days on earth, "I'll see you on the other side!"

A celebration of his life and legacy will be at 1:00pm, Friday, Dec. 12, 2025 at First Christian Church in Terrell. His family will receive friends 4:00pm to 7:00pm, Thursday, Dec. 11, at Max Slayton Funeral Chapel.

In lieu of flowers, Mr. Skelton's family asks that memorials in his honor be made to: E!Terrell at [www.eterrell.org](http://www.eterrell.org) or to the Terrell ISD Excellence Foundation at <https://www.terrellexcellencefoundation.org/in-honor-memory>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 11. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Max Slayton Funeral Chapel  
642 N. Rockwall Ave.  
Terrell, TX 75160

## Celebration of Life

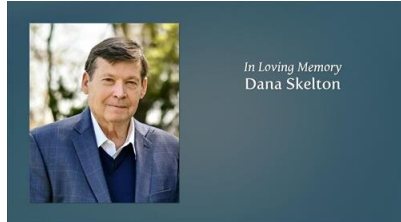
DEC 12. 1:00 PM (CT)

First Christian Church  
405 N. Adelaide St.  
Terrell, TX 75160

# Tribute Wall



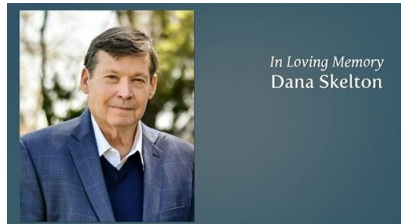
“ *Max Slayton Funerals and Cremations created a Tribute Video in memory of Dana Skelton*



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**Max Slayton Funerals & Cremations** - December 15, 2025 at 11:05 AM



“ *Max Slayton Funerals and Cremations created a Webcast in memory of Dana Skelton*



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**Max Slayton Funerals & Cremations** - December 10, 2025 at 11:22 AM



“ *Mr. Skelton was a very nice man and helped me write my grant and it was awarded by the Terrell Education Foundation a couple of years ago. I enjoyed working with him and appreciate his kindness and service. God Bless him and prayers for his friends and family.*  
*Maddox Muse*

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**Maddox Muse** - January 21 at 09:37 AM

SH

“ My condolences to the family. Will, your father was a good man he will be missed.

Stewart and Jennifer harwell - December 14, 2025 at 07:59 AM

RB

“ Mr. Skelton was known for his life lessons and those cartwheels in the band hall. We are so thankful for his love and guidance on and off the field. God bless his family during this difficult time.

Roderick T Barron - December 12, 2025 at 09:54 PM

LG

“ Sherry and family, I was so blessed to get to know Dana through my work with E! Terrell. He was such a happy man and so pleasant to be around. Our community has lost a wise, professional and dedicated civic servant. Sending prayers of healing and peace.  
Linda Gann

Linda Gann - December 12, 2025 at 02:40 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dana Skelton.



December 11, 2025 at 12:42 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Dana Skelton.*



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December 11, 2025 at 07:01 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dana Skelton.*



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December 10, 2025 at 11:03 PM



“ *Jen Waller and Paul Pearson planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dana Skelton.*

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**Jen Waller and Paul Pearson** - December 10, 2025 at 11:03 PM



“ *Deana Elliott Boyd purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Dana Skelton.*



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**Deana Elliott Boyd** - December 10, 2025 at 10:58 PM

DB

“ Deana Elliott Boyd planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dana Skelton.

Deana Elliott Boyd - December 10, 2025 at 10:58 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dana Skelton.



December 10, 2025 at 04:14 PM



“ Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Dana Skelton.



December 10, 2025 at 02:30 PM

DF

“ Dr. and Mrs. Alan Nix and Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dana Skelton.

Dr. and Mrs. Alan Nix and Family - December 10, 2025 at 02:30 PM

TF

“ *The Laywell Family lit a candle in memory of Dana Skelton*



The Laywell Family - December 10, 2025 at 01:10 PM



“ *Dana directed me at Jackson Prep 1975-'77 on the trumpet. The finest influence a man could have. Your presence here was felt by all around you and we are better for it.*



Jim Hatten - December 10, 2025 at 09:44 AM



“ *Tender Tribute was purchased for the family of Dana Skelton.*



December 10, 2025 at 09:00 AM

TG

“ *Mr. Skelton was our high school band director. We started band in the sixth grade, and for seven years he was involved in and guided our band education.*

*Like most who encountered him, I had the highest respect for Mr. Skelton; it was something his presence earned and commanded.*

*I enjoyed marching band. I was a better marcher than musician, and I wasn't even that good at marching, but Mr. Skelton made the experience rewarding in ways that went far beyond learning to read and play music. He taught character, personal responsibility, and leadership.*

*Mr. Skelton, along with his wife who was also my second-grade teacher, was deeply committed to the education of the children of Terrell, Texas. His physical presence will be missed in the short term, but his contribution to our community and society is lasting.*

*As the managing partner of a law firm, I often recall Mr. Skelton's leadership style when formulating a plan to prepare, overcome obstacles, and motivate our team. I am a better person because of Mr. Skelton, and I am just one of thousands of students he helped become better people.*

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**Tray Gober** - December 10, 2025 at 12:16 AM

DC

“ *Douglas Howie, Jr. and Va Cun-Howie purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Dana Skelton.*



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**Douglas Howie, Jr. and Va Cun-Howie** - December 09, 2025 at 11:33 PM

DM

“ First off my condolences to his family. Dana Skelton played a big part of many of our children in TISD. He had a heart for the children and especially He made them strive to do the best they could do with ease. My son Shawn McNabb was one of those children. He once told me that Shawn had the heart of a musician and that he could excel on that field because Shawn played from his heart. Years later Dana spoke of Shawn at his funeral and told a grieving family many things about their son and what he thought of him. Truly a great man and we will never forget him and that day !

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**David McNabb** - December 09, 2025 at 10:18 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dana Skelton.



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December 09, 2025 at 02:41 PM

CT

“ I had the honor and pleasure of presenting Dana with the Rotary Club of Terrell's Community Service Award at the Terrell Chamber of Commerce Annual Membership & Industrial Recognition Banquet several years ago. Dana was a perfect example of the Rotary motto, "Service Above Self". He will be missed by all. Prayers for his family during this difficult time. May their happy memories and knowledge of his countless good deeds within the Terrell community bring them comfort.

Cindy Tayem

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**Cindy Tayem** - December 09, 2025 at 02:24 PM

TM

“ I am deeply saddened by the passing of my friend, colleague, and mentor, Dana Skelton. Dana was one of the kindest, wisest, and most intelligent people I have ever known. He was an encourager at heart and a champion for both teachers and students. The guidance and mentorship he gave me helped shape my career and made me a better educator. Because of him, I grew not only professionally, but personally.

I was hired to build the theatre program two years before the Terrell Performing Arts Center opened, when construction had only just begun. Dana’s enthusiasm for the Arts was contagious. He truly believed in their power, and he was excited about every possibility they held for students and the community.

Dana modeled servant leadership every day, and his love for Christ was evident in how he lived and led. He poured into others selflessly and left a lasting mark on all who knew him.

He will be missed more than words can express. My heartfelt prayers and condolences go out to his family, colleagues, students, and the entire community.

There was none better than Dana Skelton.

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**Teresa McCasland** - December 09, 2025 at 11:45 AM

JP

“ Dana will most definitely be missed—is such an understatement. He lived, served, and loved so well. Many are blessed to have known him. We pray for God’s comfort for the family. John Brooks and Carolyn Porter

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**John Porter** - December 09, 2025 at 10:49 AM

SP

“ Susan & Ray Pinson lit a candle in memory of Dana Skelton



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Susan & Ray Pinson - December 09, 2025 at 10:35 AM

SM

“ Dana came to Ben Gill Park in August of 1983 to introduce himself to the band majorettes (and I happened to be there with Sara) who were practicing there and that was the beginning of his career in Terrell ISD. His positive attitude and leadership skills developed the band dramatically in that first year and the band kids loved him! He took the 1984 Seniors on the first TISD Band Trip to Disney World! I am smiling as I remember Mr. Skelton's detailed itinerary which even indicated the 15 minute rest stops between here and Florida. Fortunately, I served as Band Secretary for Dana Skelton during his last year as Band Director and I went as a chaperone on the final trip to Disney World in 2000 and watched as 192 band students marched in the Disney Parade. Once again Dana's leadership and organization skills and compassion for the students was amazing. Those same attributes came into play as he worked with the design and development and construction of the Performing Arts Center. What an amazing facility! Not only did it bring culture and entertainment to our community, but it provided opportunities for Terrell ISD students of all ages to experience those things in the Student Outreach performances. And it was all part of Dana Skelton's vision for Terrell.

Dana Skelton was a blessing in my life as my daughter's band director, as my boss in the band hall, and as a friend to me and Blaine. I can still hear him saying to me, "You and Blaine have always been special people in my life".

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Sallee Miller - December 09, 2025 at 10:26 AM

DH

“ Dana was generous, passionate about influencing young people, enthusiastic about eTerrell which he led for so many years. eTerrell, under his direction, was an immeasurable blessing to our community as was Dana. He was charitable to Poetry Community Christian School teachers, enabling them to get tickets to eTerrell. Dana was a joy to have as a fellow member in the Terrell Rotary Club and always promoted our musical spirit! He will be missed! Dana was a believer, so it's not goodbye but so long. Prayers are extended to the family at this time. Dr. Anne Horan

Dr. Anne Horan - December 09, 2025 at 10:11 AM

SR

“ Our sincere condolences for Mr. Skelton's family and friends. He was a very special person to so many. Rest in peace.

Sandra and Loren Riggin - December 09, 2025 at 09:08 AM



“ Dana Skelton and family touched the lives of so many. During my Sr year, my dad took a job in another state. It was devastating to have to leave all of my friends I had grown up with, especially during my Sr year. After the first semester at a new school, my parents arranged for me to move back to Terrell and live with the Skeltons so I could graduate with all my friends. I often think about them, and it has been many years since I last visited Terrell, but they will always hold a special place in my heart for their kindness and generosity. I send my love and prayers to the family. I know that Dana made an impact on the lives of so many kids.

Dan Pressley - December 09, 2025 at 08:20 AM

JF

“ *He was the best Papa I could have ever hoped for, and I will continue to look up to him and strive to work hard like he did, every day. I want to build my marriage around God the same way he did, and love the way Papa loved. I miss you so much Papa.* ”



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**Juliana Foster** - December 08, 2025 at 10:59 PM



*beautiful tribute. My condolences. He was a wonderful man.*

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**Chris Temple** - December 10, 2025 at 05:17 PM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Dana Skelton.* ”



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December 08, 2025 at 10:31 PM

KE

“ *Being in band for four years of high school was one of the most defining parts of my teenage life, and at the center of all of it was Mr. Skelton. He demanded excellence from us, not just in how we played, but how we showed up. Band practice started at 7 a.m., and through that, he taught me discipline, commitment, and pride in being part of something bigger than myself.*

*So many memories flood back, riding the bus to games, singing the fight song at the top of our lungs, marching on the field with a sense of unity and purpose. Mr. Skelton had a way of creating structure and expectation, but also fun and pride. To this day, when I watch other bands and wonder why they don't roll their feet correctly, I smile because he taught us the right way.*

*Now, as a parent, I find myself referencing those years and the lessons I learned in his band room. Mr. Skelton didn't just teach music. He helped shape lives. He definitely left his mark ...and he will truly be missed.*

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**Kenyatta** - December 08, 2025 at 08:11 PM

KC

*Yes, all of this!!!! I cant tell you how special band was to me in high school. It was a safe place, full of life, fun, and community. Mr. Skelton, Mr. Ratzliff, Mr. Cook, and Ms. Southerland were our school parents. Mr. Skelton wanted us all to reach our potential. I remember him shouting at us to roll our feet (squeeze the tube of toothpaste) and then throwing his baton into the field in frustration lol. We drove him crazy but he was one of the most stable adults in so many of our lives. He was safe, honest, and always had our best interests at heart. All my respect and a heartfelt thanks to Mr. Skelton, and much love and support to his family during this time of loss. -Katherine Cohen, THS graduate 2001*

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**Katherine Cohen** - December 09, 2025 at 03:50 AM

RJ

“ Condolences to the family 🙏 Had the pleasure of working with him when Bill Erwin and I brought the Beatles tribute band-Liverpool Legends - to Terrell for two concerts at the event center. May he rest in peace.

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**Rosi Juarez** - December 08, 2025 at 08:05 PM

DD

“ Mr. Skelton was so formative in my high school years. He was always listening, caring, helping. He was very passionate about the band and wanted us to be too. He walked me on the field for Senior Night and was definitely a father figure.

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**Daniel Durbin** - December 08, 2025 at 07:38 PM

CA

“ I am not understating it when I say that our “Fearless Leader,” band director Dana Skelton, contributed more to my memories, lessons learned, and values instilled than anything else in my entire high school experience. Dana was a mentor and role model not just to me, but to many of my friends from our days in band and all the fond memories that came with it—yes, even the days out in the parking lot in the sun.

*It was rare in my life to come across a teacher as profoundly caring and inspiring as Dana. He will be so deeply missed. He never had an ex-student—only students who were no longer in his classes.*

*As Dana and his family held music close to their hearts, “The Sweetest Gift” by The Piano Guys expresses far better than I can the emotions I feel today. Both of my daughters are in band now, and I know I would never have understood the value of that experience without Dana’s influence.*

*Rest in peace, my friend. Your fine work here is done, and for all the lives you touched, our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family, who are all our friends.*

— Cash

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Cash - December 08, 2025 at 06:56 PM

BW

*Dana Skelton was a true professional in everything he did. And I would add perfectionist as well. He took the Fighting Tiger Band to the next level upon his arrival at THS in the mid 1980's from a school in Mississippi. And the Performing Arts Center was his pride and joy and worked diligently to see the bond election passed that led to its construction.*

*I remember well he kept an eye on all aspects of the architectural design and construction process to ensure no detail was overlooked.*

*He was a good role model for many of his students. And always took the opportunity to counsel and provide guidance for them.*

*He set high standards and led the way to achieve them no matter what the task.*

*To Sherry and his wonderful family thanks for sharing him with us for all these many years.*

*Respectfully,*

*Bruce Wood*

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**Bruce Wood** - December 08, 2025 at 10:46 PM

OH

*Sherry, Will, Laura and family may God's Love and Peace be with you*



*Dana was a special person to me. We spent so much time together as THS Assistant Principal, TMS Principal, and Administration. He was great with students, staff, parents, and community (practices, games, concerts, parades, construction of facilities, Maverick fan partners, and so much more.*

*We all love ❤️ you and will miss you!*

*God Bless You!!*

*Oscar Hinchon Family*

*TERRELL ISD*

*TERRELL, TX*

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**Oscar Hinchon** - December 09, 2025 at 03:33 AM

CA

<https://youtu.be/xmTirZC8TC8>

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**Cash** - December 12, 2025 at 10:33 PM

FG

“ Dana was a cherished colleague of mine during his tenure as band director and special events coordinator for the school district. His calm demeanor and dry wit added a bright light to the days. He has mentored so many students and I'm sure enabled them to succeed throughout their different paths in life. Developing and bringing E!Terrell here through his countless hours of commitment has also impacted so many by bringing quality live entertainment to generations- younger ones to be introduced to it and older ones to enjoy and rekindle memories. What a legacy of the love of fine arts that he gifted to all of us! Well done Dana!! Our love and comfort to his beautiful family-we'll miss him greatly. Freddy, Susan & Erin Green

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**Freddy, Susan & Erin Green** - December 08, 2025 at 06:52 PM

RT

“ Our sincere condolences to Sherry and family for your loss of Dana. We know that fond memories will help fill the void he leaves right now. Knowing that Dana touched the lives of so many throughout his stewardship in Terrell should give pause for anyone reflecting on his life. Dana always met you with a smile followed by an infectious laugh. We considered Dana a dear friend even as our distance removed contact.

*If you asked our sons, Cash and Toby, there were few more meaningful in their TISD experience than Dana. For us, being in the Band Parents Organization, working closely with Dana for those four high school years, doing fundraisers, sharing two band trips to Disney, watching our sons develop both musical skill, knowledge and maturity, and just knowing a really class act meant a great deal to us. His dedicated Band Hall is both well deserved and appreciated by all who knew him. What Dana later did for E-Terrell lifted Terrell's area profile as much as any city marketing could do.*  
Rick and Sandy

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**Rick / Sandy Traylor** - December 08, 2025 at 03:53 PM

DO

*I remember Dana visiting my 5th grade class in 1983. I was in Sam Holmes room and he, Randy Ratzlaff and Cary Kuhl were building a new band program. What an eight year adventure it was! . He pushed band kids to try out for 5A region band. Unheard of. He brought in private lesson instructors from Commerce, Arlington and Denton. Terrell band kids were completing with high level 5A band programs at JJ Pierce, Berkner and Lake Highlands. My senior year, he (manually) typed scholarship recommendation letters to all the colleges I applied. So grateful for the hours he put into Terrell music program. One of a kind.*

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**DJ Ory** - December 09, 2025 at 10:47 AM

DS

*I have so many good memories of Dana and Sherry thru ETerrell. He touched so many lives, and will be missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.*

*Donna Sprague*

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**Donna Sprague** - December 10, 2025 at 10:57 AM