



Rayford Harwell

September 11, 1943 - December 6, 2015

Rayford Harwell, beloved husband, father, brother, uncle, and Terrell icon passed away peacefully December 6, 2015 surrounded by his family. Rayford was born September 11, 1943 in Terrell to Jim and Lola (Stephens) Harwell, both of whom preceded him in death along with his brother, Dennis Harwell and wife, Libby; sister-in-law, Patsy Harwell, brothers-in-law, Lumpy Taylor, David Cox, Oscar Taylor, and Yonne Lyon; parents-in-law, Jim and Grace Cunningham Taylor; and nephew, Jason Taylor.

Growing up in Terrell, Rayford was a person known for always helping anyone who needed it and he was a member of the “Magnificent Seven” in high school. After graduating from Terrell High School in 1962, Rayford (also known as Hereford) worked for Dale and Marie Witherspoon at the Exxon from 1964 to 1979 when he purchased the station and operated it with his family. In 1995, he moved the station to its Moore Ave. location where it is still located today in the heart of the town he loved so much. Even after formally retiring from the station in 2005 and then going on to work for the City of Terrell, Rayford kept tools in the street sweeper so he could always help others who may need a quick car or tire repair. In his lifetime, he played and refereed football for over 30 years as well as for baseball and softball for over 35 years and served on the Park Board for over 25 years. Rayford was recognized by the City of Terrell for his dedication to TARA and so many other civic organizations with ceremonies commemorating his tireless service during “Rayford Harwell Week”. His appearances as Santa Claus for over three

decades at both family and civic gatherings brought smiles to everyone's face. Watching Shirley bowl was a favorite activity of his and spending time with Cary at any activity. Rayford gave so much of his time to Terrell in every imaginable way. While he wasn't a man to brag or tell others of his accomplishments, he was nevertheless honored by several city and civic organizations for his dedication and his commitment to serve. He was selected as Citizen of the Year by the Rotary club and was the very first "Employee of the Month" selected, a program began by the Terrell Chamber to recognize city employees and their contributions and in 2006, Rayford was inducted to the Tiger Hall of Fame. He loved to rebuild old tractors and was a faithful member of the Terrell Tractor Club. He spent time enjoying eating at Dairy Queen and cleaning the car wash for Gail Williams and generally, just being available for anyone and everyone. His immeasurable knowledge of Terrell and the people, places and events that made Terrell what it is made conversations with Rayford a true learning experience every time. He was, and always will be, a Terrell treasure and he was truly a "one of a kind". The amount of goodness a person has to offer can never be measured but one only has to look at the scores of lives touched by Rayford to know that, actually, one person can make a difference to so many. Because of that difference, Rayford will never be forgotten and his legacy will always be remembered.

Rayford is survived by his devoted wife, Shirley, of Terrell; son, Cary Harwell of Terrell; brothers: James Harwell of Terrell, Joe Harwell and wife Claudette, of Greenville, Gary Harwell and wife, Linda of Van; sister, Nadine Day and husband Jerrell of Terrell; brother, Jerry Clower and wife Barbara of Wills Point; brother-in-law, George Taylor and wife, Anne of Elmo; sisters-in-law, Beverly Taylor of Rowlett, Dorothy Crow of Kaufman, Leona Harwell of Garland, Betty Gutierrez and husband, Leonard of Mineola; Donna Harwood of Kaufman, Charlotte Corley of Longview; as well as several nieces, nephews, extended family and a host of friends who will never forget him and his smile with his trademark mustache.

A celebration of life will be held at 2:00pm, Saturday, Dec. 12, 2015 at First Baptist Church in Terrell. In remembrance of the legacy and love Rayford had for Terrell, memorials may be made to:

Terrell Tiger Hall of Fame Scholarship Fund

PO Box 1070, Terrell, Texas, 75160

ATTN: Mike Burt

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

DEC 12. 2:00 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church of Terrell
403 N. Catherine
Terrell, TX 75160
<http://www.fbcterrell.org>

Tribute Wall



“ *Rayford Harwell*

October 08, 2023 at 07:43 PM



“ *I was so saddened to hear of the loss of such a great man. He was always a smiling, cheerful man who brightened the lives of those around him. He will truly be missed.*

Amy Fulton King - December 17, 2015 at 02:01 PM



“ *Roger & Rosa West purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Rayford Harwell.*



Roger & Rosa West - December 12, 2015 at 12:10 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Rayford Harwell.*



December 11, 2015 at 07:58 AM

JH

“ Rayford was a great neighbor. I umpired hundreds of softball games with him (he was the best umpire I ever saw). Also I worked for him at his convenience store and he was one of the best men I have ever known. I loved him like the brother I never had. I know he is enjoying his favorite, his mother's chocolate fried pies, in heaven. R.I.P. Rayf.

Joe and Linda Hogan

Joe and Linda Hogan - December 10, 2015 at 08:18 PM

DP

“ It was always fun to ride horses to visit Rayford when his family lived on the Ables Springs highway. Their property backed up to ours on the Greenville highway. He was a serious student and challenged those whom he met. He played fullback on our football teams and never gave up, played long and steady no matter what the circumstances. He took care of his friends and befriended all, no matter who they were. His wit and dedication to the principles of leadership and community will be long remembered.
Darryl E. Parker

Darryl Parker - December 10, 2015 at 01:07 PM

GF

“ GREG & KATHY HARWELL AND BRANDI AND JORDAN'S FAMILY purchased the Truly Beloved Bouquet for the family of Rayford Harwell.



GREG & KATHY HARWELL AND BRANDI AND JORDAN'S FAMILY - December 10, 2015 at 09:33 AM

FJ

“ *From Your Buddy Aubrey Jones purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Rayford Harwell.*



From Your Buddy Aubrey Jones - December 09, 2015 at 09:12 PM

AM

“ *We have fond memories of visiting with Rayford and sharing his interests. We appreciate his help and kindness to Felton & Juanita Harwell (our parents). He was like a son to them. We will miss him. Avon & Martha (Harwell) Miller*

Avon Miller - December 09, 2015 at 02:35 PM

LW

“ *My greatest childhood memories were those spent on the baseball fields every summer. I was a softball pitcher, and Rayford umpired many of my games and even gave me tips when he thought I needed them. To me, he was the "best umpire ever."*

When I was a teenager, I would stop at his station on Rockwall St. and he would pump my gas for me. I was too old to play softball then, but we would still take time to talk baseball.

My condolences to the Harwell family - may you feel God's comfort and peace now and in the days to come.

Lisa (Harper) White

Lisa White - December 09, 2015 at 11:56 AM



“ Rayford was one of those rare individuals that no matter what was needed, he was there, any time, any where. He treated everyone as a friend. You couldn't talk to him for more than 10 minutes without feeling that you'd known him all of your life. Rayford may not have been in a class by himself, but whatever class he was in, it didn't take long to call roll. And don't you know that Heaven just got a lot better with his presence there.

You will be terribly missed by more people than you can possibly imagine.

Rest in Peace my friend.

Barnett and JoAnn Carthey

Barnett Carthey - December 09, 2015 at 09:59 AM



“ Rayford you will be missed by many including me I'm so glad I had a chance to see you for one more last time.. back in August I ran into Rayford at the Terrell library and he mention to me that he had cancer and was taking chemo he knew that he wasn't going to live long but he was in good spirits he was a man Of God with a big heart ,carriage ,joy, hope and full of love to give to other's most of all he loved to lend a helping hand to others. Rayford was my favorite of all time. #person #umpire #friend # role model

Rest in peace my friend

Love , Lisa Miles



Lisa Miles - December 08, 2015 at 06:50 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Rayford Harwell.*



December 08, 2015 at 05:31 PM



“ *Rayford was certainly one of kind and Terrell won't be the same without him. My deepest sympathy to the Harwell family and all who loved him. RIP Rayford; you will be missed but never forgotten.*

Lanora Garner - December 08, 2015 at 04:20 PM



“ *Rayford was one of Terrell's finest, ever. Always funny and always willing to help anyone out at the drop of a hat. We will all miss him greatly. He loved live and passed that enthusiasm on to anyone with whom he came into contact. You made us better people. RIP, my friend.
Rick Rickman*

Rick Rickman - December 08, 2015 at 03:57 PM



“ *Rainbow Of Remembrance Spray was purchased for the family of Rayford Harwell.*



December 08, 2015 at 12:53 PM

TS

“ We all walk the long road. Cannot stay...
There's no need to say goodbye...
All the friends and family
All the memories going round, round, round
I have wished for so long
How I wish for you today

(Eddie Vedder) "The Long Road"

Tom Simmons - December 08, 2015 at 12:37 PM

TS

“ I had only met Rayford a couple of times at the family reunions.
However, I remember the stories my dad, Kenneth Harwell, would
tell us of him spending the night with his cousins, Rayford and his
brothers. such fond memories. Cousins are reunited in Heaven and
reminiscing of all those times. Prayers of comfort and strength for
Shirley, Cary and the rest of his family.

Theresa Sanders - December 08, 2015 at 09:59 AM

JS

“ RIP Rayford thank you for all the years
serving others in Terrell.



Julie Sanders - December 07, 2015 at 10:09 PM

MW

“ *Rayford Harwell was a dear friend and co-worker. Man with a Big Heart, leader of his fellow man on how we should treat others. He never met a stranger. He will be missed. Condolences to the Harwell family.*

Mike White - December 07, 2015 at 09:37 PM

CF

“ *Charles, Alice, Wesley, Shawn, Tammy and all the Patton family purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Rayford Harwell.*



Charles, Alice, Wesley, Shawn, Tammy and all the Patton family - December 07, 2015 at 08:39 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rayford Harwell.*



December 07, 2015 at 07:26 PM

CP

“ *the best at everything he did from behind the plate and tell the kids how to hit the ball to playing Santa and above all to being a great friend and person YOU WILL BE MISSED*

Charles and Alice Patton - December 07, 2015 at 07:20 PM

KC

“ I can not remember a time when I didn't know this sweet, prankster of a man with a big mustache. I could not wait to go visit him and hear his laughter. Growing up with him was a blessing. Prayers, Hugs and Kisses to his Family.

Kimberly McDonald Coleman Colmenares - December 07, 2015 at 07:08 PM

PM

“ Rayford was a childhood friend who has been a friend for life and leaves a large empty space in this world. Bill and I send our prayers for Shirley and the rest of the family as you go forward with his memory and memories of all the good love and laughs you have shared.

Patsy Sparks Marshall

Patsy Marshall - December 07, 2015 at 07:04 PM

CA

“ When I think of Rayford, the first thing I do is smile. He was a fixture at the softball fields when I was young and playing softball. He had everyone's respect and we all loved him. Through the years he always knew who I was, one of Jerry Crow's girls, and greeted me with a hug and smile, even though we didn't see him often. He was a great man and I will always remember him fondly. Prayers are sent to Shirley, Carey and all the family.

Carolyn Crow Scott

Carolyn - December 07, 2015 at 06:58 PM

VD

“ *Rayford Harwell was a neighbor, family friend and a great servant to others. Not a day went by that he did not do something for another person. Who could ever forget this guy. We shall cherish our memories. He was uncle to several of our nieces and nephews and great great nieces and nephews and they dearly loved him.*



Virginia DeLong - December 07, 2015 at 06:43 PM


Heather
Fisher

“ *As kids, I remember sitting on his lap at the reunions, playing with his mustache. We miss you Rayford!*

Heather Fisher - December 07, 2015 at 04:53 PM

SW

“ *Will be missed and never a more awesome friend, neighbor and citizen of Terrell*

Sherri Winton - December 07, 2015 at 04:44 PM

MK

“ *Rayford, you are already missed. For some reason, you trusted me from day-one when we met. Thank you for your trust & friendship! May God rest your soul! May we meet again.*

Mike Khan.

Mike Khan - December 07, 2015 at 03:50 PM

MB

“ *Rayford had always amazed me with his mustache. Always perfectly twisted and poned. He will be missed.*

Malinda Bostick - December 07, 2015 at 03:46 PM

TH

“ *So very sorry to hear this !! He was a very good friend to my mom and dad and always looked out for us as we were growing up !! I also loved his mustache And always would ask him how he always had it so perfect everyday and every time !!!!! Always had a smile on his face and always very helpful and just a nice soul!!!! My prayers are with his family and condolence To all !!!!! Rest in peace and you will never be forgotten !!!*

Teresa Huttel - December 07, 2015 at 02:45 PM



“ *Rayford has been my friend since the Fall of 1957, A great person in every way....totally unselfish. We officiated football games for 23 years....had many fun times with him. Sure gonna miss him. God bless you Shirley and Cary for taking such good care of him.*

Don Burnes - December 07, 2015 at 02:34 PM

JW

“ I didn't have the opportunity to know Rayford for years and years like many of you, but I did have the pleasure of knowing him for almost 4 years. He always teased me about being from New York and always told me that I was an alright person for being a Yankee. For the short time I knew him, I knew he was a good man. I can imagine him telling everyone this:



Jane Weems - December 07, 2015 at 02:27 PM

NI

“ We sure are going to miss "Trouble" coming in to see us & making us laugh. My heart hurts & I am saddened by his loss. Shirley, you, his brother, Carey, & all the rest of his family & friends will be in my daily thoughts & prayers. Missing y'all already. The world has lost a wonderful man. He had one of the most positive spirits I have ever seen. Even when he didn't feel good, he would still tell you he was doing good. Never complained a bit. I hope to see you Saturday at the celebration of his life. Nicole Arnett

Nicole - December 07, 2015 at 02:04 PM

JC

“ I'll always remember him at the gas station. He helped me out with car trouble more than once when I was a kid.
Jerry Click

Jerry Click - December 07, 2015 at 01:28 PM

MT

“ I remember Rayford from my childhood in the 60's. He umpired a good many of my baseball games. I lived a few blocks from his gas station on Rockwall. Anytime I had a basketball or a bike tire that needed air, Rayford was always there with a smile to pump it up for me. Once he found out that I had been popping the caps off of the bottles in his Coke machine. Rather than turn me in to the police or tell my parents, he allowed me to do odd jobs to cover the damages. Rayford was a good man, and always fair in his dealings with everyone, especiall y so when it came to us kids. Terrell has truly lost a great man.

Michael Teaster, Caameron, Missouri

Michael Teaster - December 07, 2015 at 01:27 PM

LH

“ I am so sorry for your loss! My heart hurts for you Shirley and Carey. Mr. Harwell was such a beautiful person inside and out - He will be missed by so many. I feel so blessed and thankful that I got to know him in this life. I pray our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ comforts you and brings you peace during this horrible time and the days to come.

God Bless!

Lori H.

Lora Horton - December 07, 2015 at 01:10 PM

RS

“ I remember spending weeks at Aunt Lola and Uncle Jim's when Rayford, his brothers, and I were young. Looked forward to it every summer.

Ron Stephens

Ron Stephens - December 07, 2015 at 12:39 PM

CL

“ Thoughts and prayers are with Shirley and Cary.

Carol Lipe

Carol Lipe - December 07, 2015 at 12:36 PM

BN

“ Such a kind soul. Condolences.

Nitschke Family

Becky Nitschke - December 07, 2015 at 12:28 PM

TS

“ So sad to hear about Rayford. A true friend to everyone, always there to help! He kept my junk cars running for years!

Tom Simmons Carson City Nevada

Tom Simmons - December 07, 2015 at 11:47 AM

MH

“ Shirley and Carey, Rayford will never be forgotten. Only kind words were ever spoken of him. Merita Harper

merita Harper - December 07, 2015 at 11:09 AM

DM

“ Rayford was a legend in Terrell, Texas that will be truly missed. Condolences to the Harwell family during this time of sorrow. May God bless and give you peace. Dale & Pat Martin

Dale Martin - December 07, 2015 at 10:44 AM

BG

“ Herford was truly "One of a Kind". A great husband, father and friend to all and to all a friend. His service and dedication not only extended beyond his work place, but to the entire community. Ready to help anyone at the drop of a hat. Heaven will never be the same! Our thoughts and prayers are with Shirley and the Harwell family.

Bill & Linda Griffin

Bill & Linda Griffin - December 07, 2015 at 10:40 AM

SA

“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Sabella - December 07, 2015 at 07:22 AM

RT

“ Our sincerest sympathies to the family of Rayford Harwell. He was truly one of Terrell's favorite heroes. He leaves a void that only memories can fill. He will be missed by all who knew him.

Rick and Sandy Traylor - December 07, 2015 at 02:29 AM

MR

“ Cary and family, my heart aches for you all. Rayford was an awesome man. Over the years growing up in Terrell, we all have treasured memories of your dad. Prayers for you all



Monica Roberts - December 06, 2015 at 10:50 PM

MB

“ *Your smile and sense of humor brought happiness to everyone, you will be missed. Our condolences to the Harwell family.*



Micheal and Brenda Bulin - December 06, 2015 at 07:08 PM

JA

*After Stanley retired, Rayford occasionally stopped by the house to check on us and to tell Stan hi. When I went to answer the door, he always removed his hat/cap to greet me. You just don't see a man being that respectful anymore. Now, my friend. My hat is off to you.
Janell*

Janell - December 07, 2015 at 02:52 PM

PW

Rayford was a super individual - always smiling - will certainly miss seeing him around

Polly Webb

Polly Webb - December 07, 2015 at 03:08 PM

GS

Praying for all of you Cary! Your dad was a good man! A kind man! Always had a smile! He will be missed!

Gayla Sizemore - December 07, 2015 at 04:07 PM

PK

We will miss seeing Raford around town, not many like him around, we can't afford to lose him. God bless.

Pete and Shirley Kuban.

Pete Kuban - December 08, 2015 at 09:59 PM

MM

Shirley and Carey, my heart is so very sad as I know yours is. But I picture Rayford in my mind and I can't help but smile. What a great and caring man. He helped me many a time as he did so many others. I wished the world could be full of Rayfords, but we all know there is only one Rayford. Thank you both for sharing him with Terrell. My family loved him and always will. You are both in our thoughts and prayers. God Bless.

*With much love,
Joe & Margaret Lovell Matura*

Margaret Lovell Matura - December 08, 2015 at 10:36 PM

LA

*Will be missed great friend.
Larry armstrong*

larry armstrong - December 09, 2015 at 05:40 AM

LG

My thoughts and prayers are with you Shirley and Carey as you go through this difficult time; even though Rayford was going through this sickness and treatments he always would tell you he was doing ok. When I think of Rayford I will always think of his mustache; he truly was a good person. God bless you.

Linda Gober - December 09, 2015 at 03:01 PM