



Darrell Van Smith

December 5, 1938 - May 6, 2018

Darrell Van Smith of Hot Springs, AR died Sunday May 6, 2018 after a long fight with cancer. He is survived by Nancy, his loving wife of nearly 55 years, his sons Scott Smith and Grant (Amanda) Smith, granddaughter Gwyneth Smith, mother Mildred Smith, brother Winston Smith, sister Marge Grisham, and a large extended family. He was preceded in death by his father, Van Smith.

Darrell was born Dec. 5, 1938 in Mt. Pine to Van and Mildred Smith. He grew up in Hot Springs and was a 1956 graduate of Lakeside High. He obtained a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Hendrix in 1960. He went on to earn a Master's Degree in Theology from Southern Methodist University in Dallas and pursued post-graduate work at the Institute of Religion at the Texas Medical Center in Houston.

After six years of serving the United Methodist Church as a Minister to congregations in White Hall, Eudora, and Camden, he and Nancy moved back to Hot Springs to serve the community he loved and raise their family. Here, he was the Director of Economic Planning for the West Central District of the Arkansas Planning & Development writing the first grants that established Garland County Community College, Mid-America Park, and Mid-America Museum. Darrell also wrote the proposal to the Governor's Office on Aging establishing the Area Agency on Aging of West Central Arkansas and then led

as Executive Director for 25 years. Throughout his tenured career at the AAA, Darrell was honored with many awards and his calling to serve the elderly was fully realized.

Darrell's dedication to services for the Aging kept him busy throughout his professional career and retirement. Some of his volunteer leadership included chairing the Arkansas Assoc. of AAA Directors, serving on the original Board for the National Assoc. of Area Agencies, chairing the National Rural Aging Conference, an appointment to the Governor's Advisory Committee on Aging by two Governors, and serving on the Board of Directors for Levi Hospital and the Levi Tower Housing Advisory Board for over 30 years. Most recently, he acted as board Co-chair to the Oaklawn Center for Aging from its inception until last year.

Darrell was known as an avid hunter and fisherman, amateur photographer, music enthusiast, and Oaklawn Racing fan. He passed on his outdoor passions to his sons, leading them to build a cabin in the Fourche Valley. His interest in archeology and Native American artifacts flourished after discovering many unique artifacts on their farm. He joined the Ouachita Chapter of the Arkansas Archeological Society and was honored to have his extensive collection of double-bitted axes serve as the basis for a Master's thesis at the University of Arkansas, Dept. of Anthropology.

Of all his many life accomplishments, Darrell's proudest is his family. He met Nancy Edwards in Camden in 1962 while working as an Assoc. Pastor at the First United Methodist Church before attending SMU. They married on June 23rd, 1963. She has been his partner in life, work, and travel. Together, they traveled to 6 continents, 20 countries, and nearly all 50 states. Some of the highlights included the Great Barrier Reef, New Zealand, and Indonesia. His sons have been a source of pride, but Grampers' greatest joy was his granddaughter. Darrell adopted a credo early in his Methodist career: "we are

here to help.” He stayed true to that motto throughout his life and is proud to pass that legacy on to his family.

Honorary Pallbearers will be the Lakeside Class of 1956.

A Celebration of Life will be held in the Klipsch Amphitheater at Garvan Woodland Gardens on Friday May 11th at 1:30pm. The family will receive guests following the ceremony. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Klipsch Amphitheater.

Tribute Wall

JT

“ Dear Nancy,
I was so sorry to learn of Darrell. I will always remember the kindness and support he showed me. Our love and thoughts are with you.
Jack and Margrit Thorne

Jack Thorne - September 16, 2018 at 01:29 PM

AW

“ Nancy,

I am very saddened to learn of Darrell's passing. He was one of the most kind and caring people I have ever known. I regret that I will be out of town for his service so please accept my condolences.
Sincerely, Adam Williams

adam williams - May 11, 2018 at 09:34 AM

GC

“ Nancy, I was so saddened to learn of Darrell's death. I had heard he was ill but did not realize how ill. I, too, was diagnosed with colorectal cancer last summer and am still seeking to heal. Thus, I will not be able to attend the service on Friday. But, he was a very dear and deeply respected friend. You and your family are in my prayers. God bless you all.

Gladwin Connell

Gladwin Connell - May 09, 2018 at 03:28 PM

KT

“ Grant & Amanda, I am sorry for your loss. Your dad was quite a man, one to be proud of. Kent Taylor

Kent Taylor - May 09, 2018 at 08:00 AM



“ Darrell was a very kind and caring Man. I met him several years ago although our paths have not crossed recently. I knew immediately that he was a very special man. As I was reading the online obituary I wondered if the Cabin was still in existence. He had recently purchased the property in Fourche Valley and he was very excited. To say the least it is a very small world because that is where my husband was raised and his family have lived their entire lives. It was so wonderful to hear his plans improving the property. My deepest sympathy to the entire family. I know that the special memories of Darrell will help with your healing.

Kim Billingsley
Jessieville, AR

Kim Billingsley - May 08, 2018 at 04:14 PM

AM

“ I am so very sorry to hear of this great loss of such a wonderful man and my heart breaks for Nancy and the entire Smith family 😞. Darrell could absolutely make you laugh until you cried!! I am so grateful to have been a part of his family for so many years and I know his Great Legacy will live on thru his sons and the love of his life his beautiful sweet wife Nancy ❤️. You are now cancer free Darrell and Celebrating Life on the streets of Gold!!! Lots of Love!! Always~”auntie alice “

Alice Griffith Smith Moore - May 08, 2018 at 12:48 PM

DR

“ Rest in peace, Darrell. Your legacy lives on.

David Rice - May 08, 2018 at 09:59 AM

CJ

Nancy and family, I am so sorry to about Darrell. He was a wonderful and kind man. He will truly be missed! You guys will always be family to us! Sending love and prayers.

colleen and Paul Johnson - May 08, 2018 at 01:06 PM

ST

“ Nancy - Darrell did so much for the senior centers in our region. You and Darrell have a special place in my heart. He will be greatly missed.

Sherry Tidwell
Pope County Senior Center

Sherry Tidwell - May 08, 2018 at 09:36 AM

PD

“ Nancy-So sorry to hear about Darrell. He was a sweet & awesome person! Big hugs and prayers to all the family.



pam davis - May 08, 2018 at 07:15 AM