



Wesley Dean Rooks

October 8, 1924 - March 28, 2016

Wesley Dean Rooks, 91, of Gillett, AR was called home on March 28, 2016. Currently living in Benton, AR, he was born October 8, 1924, in Bald Knob, AR to the late John A. and Burlie (Woodruff) Rooks. After graduating from Bald Knob High School, he served in the U.S. Navy as a Seaman First Class during World War II. He received an honorable discharge in 1946. Wesley went on to complete his education and received his Bachelors of Science in Education in 1962 from Arkansas State Teachers College and his Master of Science in Education in 1972 from State College of Arkansas. He taught math for many years for the Gillett School District having a positive influence on the children in Gillett. His encouragement to his students went far beyond the classroom.

Wesley was affectionately called Unc by his nieces and nephews. He was a long time active member of Gillette First United Methodist Church and currently a member of St. James United Methodist Church in Little Rock. He loved traveling with his family and going on mission trips with his church. Wesley was an avid Razorback fan. His passion for golf, with his devoted wife Ella Mae as his partner, kept him young and active for many years. He played his last golf tournament on his 90th birthday making a hole in one. He was one of the longest tenured leaders for the American Legion Boys State of Arkansas. He performed many roles at Boys State to include teacher, dean of counselors, program director for 6 terms, office assistant, county name

(#RooksCounty) and most notably as long term commissioner. The number of lives touched by Wesley throughout his 46 years at Boys State is immeasurable. Lives will continue to be touched as he has donated his body to UAMS for research.

He was preceded in death by his parents, twin brother, Ernest, brothers Harold and Carol, sister, Norma, devoted and loving wife Ella Mae, infant children, Daryl Dean, Janet Sue and great nephew, Barry Strickland. Cherishing his memory is sister, Gracie Wheeler, sister -in-law Carolyn Fletcher and many nieces, nephews and friends.

A memorial service will be held at the Arkansas State Veterans Cemetery in No. Little Rock, AR, Saturday, April 2, 2016 at 2pm. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations be made to the Department of Arkansas American Legion Boys State, PO Box 3280, Little Rock, AR 72203.

Tribute Wall

AH

“ I taught and coached in Gillett for two years; 1974-1976 and also served as Senior Counselor at American Legion Boys State for several years. Mr. Rooks was a personable fellow, fun of energy and vitality. I remember Mr. Rooks and Mrs. Rooks always traveled to Memphis each year for the Memphis Open golf tournament and they would always share stories of seeing some of the famous golfers. Mr. Rooks always brought his lunch and would sit at Ms. Ella Mae's desk (she was the high school secretary). He was an excellent math teacher and maintained high expectations for his students. Even though he was fun of life and humorous, he was a 'non-sense" teacher and did not tolerate disturbances in the classroom

Alvis Hooks

Alvis Hooks - April 07, 2016 at 10:42 AM

PT

“ Mr. Wesley you were truly a wonderful person. You and Ms. Ella Mae will always hold a very special place in my heart. You both stepped in to sponsor our first Pep Club at Gillett High School and you drove the bus to take us to all the ball games. You both played a very special role in many lives and you will truly be missed. I'm sure that Ms. Ella Mae and my Mom and Dad were there to meet you and welcome you to your Heavenly Home.

*Love ya always,
Paula Hollman Thompson*

Paula Hollman Thompson - April 04, 2016 at 05:38 PM

GH

“ So many wonderful memories of our times together, the Bridge Club, his teaching our kids a little math, our socials and Ella Mae's famous Blueberry Pancakes afterward, and just countless other memories. A truly fine family, Wesley will be truly missed. Shirley and Gene Holloway, Gillett

Gene Holloway - April 02, 2016 at 10:29 AM

DC

“ Math always scared me, but Mr. Rooks taught it to me anyway!



Diann Aaron Cunningham - April 01, 2016 at 06:35 PM

SB

“ Was so sad to learn of the passing of my longtime friend. I wish that I could be there tomorrow to honor him, but will be out of town. But please know my thoughts and prayers are with you. I first met him when I was a delegate at Boys State and for many years now I have spoke every year at Boys State and I always looked forward to seeing my friend every year. I would see him at the Coon Supper and he was always such an inspiration to me and I will be forever grateful that I had the opportunity to know him and call him friend.

Shane Broadway

Shane Broadway - April 01, 2016 at 11:10 AM



“ *Mr. Rooks was a wonderful teacher, who will be deeply missed. I think that I received my first D in his class, but I learned many lessons from him. I remember him reading "Zero is my Hero" for us. God bless you and keep you in his loving arms.*



Nancy Wallace-Keys - March 31, 2016 at 07:32 PM

LS

“ *Wesley and I met in graduate school. After we discovered we were both from Bald Knob we became friends and Sharon and I visited with them whenever possible. He loved to play golf and was very patient with me and my poor attempts at playing with him. We would get together with him and Ella Mae at the Razorback Games in Little Rock before we moved to Huntsville, AL. They were great friends and I don't think they ever met a stranger.*

Lindell Smith - March 31, 2016 at 06:22 PM

JK

“ *Great teacher and mentor. I saw him many times after his retirement and he was always smiling and positive. Very active with Boys State and golf.*

Joe Kelnhofer - March 31, 2016 at 05:04 PM

DH

“ *I spent many days with Mr. Rooks at our beloved deer camp in Gillett. Seems he would always miss a "spike" on the first weekend. But he did not "miss" in 1999 when he bagged a nice buck. He was a truly great man and he loved teaching. Those who knew him are fortunate. I am pleased to have had his friendship for several years.*

Dr. Lee Hinson - March 31, 2016 at 01:13 PM

MR

“ *My deepest condolences to the family of Mr. Rooks. He had an influential impact on many students in the Gillett schools. He will missed by many people.*

Respectfully,

Mark Roberts

Mark Roberts - March 31, 2016 at 10:42 AM

ME

“ *I had Mr Rooks for 6 years for Math. My Jr year there were only 2 of us taking Algebra II. He'd bring us cokes from the teachers lounge. He was an excellent teacher. I admired him very much. He had a lasting impact on my life.*

Mickey Traylor Eastham

Mickey Eastham - March 30, 2016 at 11:50 PM