



Emma Lou Prater

July 22, 1929 - December 23, 2020

Services for Emma Lou Prater, 91, of Whitehouse, formerly of Tyler, will be held on Tuesday, December 29, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. in the Stewart Family Funeral Home Chapel with Dr. Blair Blackburn and Tom Crawford officiating. Burial will follow in Cathedral in the Pines Cemetery in Tyler under the direction of Stewart Family Funeral Home.

Mrs. Prater passed away Wednesday, December 23, 2020 in Whitehouse. She was born July 22, 1929 in Edom to the late Roy Andrew Wyatt and Alice Steele Wyatt.

Emma Lou was a member of Westwood Baptist Church, formerly Queen Street Baptist where she taught a College and Career Sunday School class. She graduated from Tyler High School in 1945 at the age of 15 and attended TJC in 1945-46. She married Kenneth Prater on December 5, 1947 and they were married 65 years until his death in 2013. Emma Lou worked for the General Electric Company from 1957 to 1964 in advertising and sales promotion. She fondly remembers getting to meet Ronald Reagan during this time.

She began her career at Tyler Junior College in 1964 and worked as an accountant in the business office. She also began working with the cheerleaders during this time and she and her family never missed a TJC

football or basketball game. She loved having the TJC athletes over for Sunday evening suppers, since the cafeteria was closed at that time.

In 1968, Emma Lou went back to school to get her degree while working full time. She got her bachelor's degree in 1971 and her master's in 1983 from East Texas State University in Commerce. In 1978, Kenneth's job took them away from Tyler for a couple of years, but when they returned, Emma Lou went back to work at TJC, this time as the Student Activities director.

In this capacity, she worked with all of the student organizations, but most closely with the Student Senate. She also became the full-time sponsor of the cheerleaders. She and the cheerleaders would hold cheerleader camps in the area and even took a group to Germany to hold a camp for some of the schools there. These were the years that were the most precious to her as she had many memories of this time in her life. She was awarded the Emma Lou Prater Presidential Scholarship in 1989 and retired the same year.

After retirement, Emma Lou still worked closely with the TJC Alumni Association, serving as president and member of the board of directors. Also, she and Kenneth enjoyed playing golf and traveling with their golfing group. She also loved hosting parties for her friends and family, reading and working in her yard.

Emma Lou was preceded in death by her husband, Kenneth Prater; her brother, Royce Wyatt, and her sister-in-law, Fern Prater Timmons. She is survived by her loving family including daughters, Sherry Patterson of Longview, Tx. and Sandy Adams and husband, Rick of Whitehouse, Tx.; grandchildren, Jason Adams and wife, Crystal of Fairfield, Tx., Rebecca Adams Rodriguez and husband, Kris of Whitehouse, Tx., Jennifer Patterson Lowe and partner, Leslie Deucker of Tyler, Tx., and Julie Patterson Odom and husband, Jason of Wylie, Tx.; great-grandchildren, Kolby Adams, Regan Rodriguez, Alex Rodriguez, Cole Odom and Caden Odom; sisters-in-law,

Mary Prater Jones of Tyler, Tx. and Rebecca Wyatt of Odessa, Tx.; several nieces and nephews, as well as countless TJC students who have been impacted by her life over the years.

Pallbearers will be Jason Adams, Kolby Adams, Kris Rodriguez, Regan Rodriguez, Alex Rodriguez and Pat Snow. Honorary pallbearers will be former TJC cheerleaders.

Visitation is scheduled from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. on Monday, December 28, 2020 at Stewart Family Funeral Home, 7525 Old Jacksonville Highway, in Tyler.

If desired, memorials may be made to either of these Tyler Junior College Scholarships: The Emma Lou Prater Presidential Scholarship or The Kenneth Prater Cheerleader Scholarship or to the charity of your choosing.

Cemetery Details

Cathedral in the Pines Cemetery

7825 South Broadway Avenue
Tyler, TX 75703

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC **28**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Stewart Family Funeral Home
7525 Old Jacksonville Hwy
Tyler, TX 75703
(903) 581-2008

Service

DEC **29**. 2:00 PM (CT)

Stewart Family Funeral Home
7525 Old Jacksonville Hwy
Tyler, TX 75703
(903) 581-2008

Tribute Wall



“ Stewart Family Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Emma Lou Prater



Stewart Family Funeral Home - December 29, 2020 at 02:24 PM

DB

What a great tribute to an awesome women. I too loved her smile and find myself so grateful for my years with her at TJC. I often tell others that TJC was the best years of my life. Full of love, fun and adventure. She drove us to be more than we thought we could be and cared for us as if we were her own children.
Daryl Butler

Daryl D Butler - January 04, 2021 at 04:57 PM



“ Stewart Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Emma Lou Prater



Stewart Family Funeral Home - December 28, 2020 at 05:05 PM

HD

That was beautiful! Perfect for person who is truly beautiful inside and out! Her precious smile and unstoppable joy that overflowed each day was a gift to all of us! She will be deeply missed. May God's peace be with you all. ❤️

Holly Drain - December 29, 2020 at 02:45 AM

DB

*“ Crazy story. We were in California getting ready to cheer at a bowl game and I got tennis elbow pain so bad that I couldn't do partner stunts. Emma Lou walked by me and placed some meds in my hand and said "take this and don't ask me what it is." I took it and managed to cheer the whole game with no pain.
Daryl*

Daryl D Butler - January 04, 2021 at 05:23 PM

HW

“ Emma Lou (GG) was a sweet lady and will be greatly missed. We pray for peace and comfort to the entire family. We love you!

Wayne, Lillian, and Heather Beth Williams

Heather Williams - December 29, 2020 at 11:01 AM

LL

“ Sandy, I have many fond memories of your mom (and dad) during our days at Queen Street Baptist Church. And I am praying that your memories will comfort you the rest of you life. Your mom was a special lady.

Linda Hill Lane

Linda Hill Lane - December 29, 2020 at 01:03 AM

SN

“ Emma Lou was a tremendous part of my college life at TJC. She was the center of the TeePee--always greeting us with a smile, a hug, or words of encouragement. She made us feel a part of everything that was the life of the TJC Apaches. If I needed to talk -- she was there. I have so many fond memories of her and the time I spent at her house or on the phone or sharing the experiences I had as a cheerleader and the fun we had going to games. We all loved her dearly---Truly a remarkable and sweet lady. May God's grace be with her family and friends. Thank you for sharing her with us all those years.

Susan Spence Norvell

Susan Norvell - December 28, 2020 at 08:14 PM



“ 96 files added to the album Life Tributes



Stewart Family Funeral Home - December 28, 2020 at 04:57 PM

CC

“ I can't remember an event at TJC when I didn't see Emma Lou! She was the heart of our beloved college! Everyone loved her and her presence will be missed!



carleta cates - December 28, 2020 at 10:54 AM

CG

“ So enjoyed Emma Lou (Mrs. Prayer at that time as I was a student) when her office was in the same hallway as Eva Saunders' and Eddie Fowler's offices. She was such a help to do many students and always had a beautiful smile. She will truly be missed.

Charlotte George - December 27, 2020 at 11:18 PM

MW

“ Sherry,
So sorry for the loss of your mother. We will keep the family in prayers.
Love
Marybeth and Cornell Waggonner

Marybeth Waggonner - December 26, 2020 at 09:09 PM