

James Decker Kennington

January 16, 1937 - March 21, 2025

Services for James Decker Kennington, 88, of Tyler, will be held Friday, April 25, 2025 at 2:00 PM at Stewart Family Funeral Home with Rev. Pike Wisner officiating. Visitation will be held one hour prior to services.

Decker was born January 16, 1937, the ninth child out of nine, left this earth on March 25, 2025, on his way to visit with family and friends and to see Jesus.

Decker was the son of J.F. and Louise Kennington of New Boston, Texas. His parents and all his siblings are now deceased. He had three brothers: Richard, Bill, and Carroll, and five sisters: Sophia Pace, Carrie Faye Williams, Velma Hitchcock, Hazel McCright, and Marie Robertson.

Decker grew up on a farm near New Boston, Texas. He graduated from New Boston High School in 1955, having played football and basketball in high school. He attended Texarkana Jr. College on a basketball scholarship, and then transferred to North Texas State College from which he graduated in 1959 with a Bachelor's of Business Administration.

He served in the US Army from 1959-1961. He was assigned to a position in cryptography, but managed to also play on a basketball team while stationed in Germany.

On January 26, 1963, Decker married Linda Prange. They moved to Tyler, where he worked briefly as an accountant for Hunt Oil Company. He began work for The Procter and Gamble Company in Sales /Management. He made many friends and enjoyed the camaraderie of sales representatives in Tyler. Decker enjoyed playing golf, attending sporting events, coaching basketball for David's YMCA team, as well as coaching Bradley's T-Ball team. He loved attending Sunday School and Church Services at First Baptist Tyler, where he faithfully served as a deacon. He worked many years in youth Sunday Schools. He and Linda did team teaching with college students for ten years.

He was a faithful volunteer for Meals on Wheels for 30 years. He was looking forward to volunteering until he was 90.

Decker is survived by his loving wife, Linda, son David Kennington and wife Korree, grandsons Collin Kennington and Cooper Kennington of Nashville, TN, and Bradley Kennington of Austin, TX. Also surviving are many nephews, nieces, cousins, and friends.

Honorary Pallbearers are Jerry Craig, Titus Jones, John Rolling, Jim Hartung, Jimmy Rex, Mark Magee, John Minton, Larry Corley, Dick Barnett, Mike Hendricks, David Couch, Travis Hunt, Jeff Martin, Gene Caldwell, Jack Adrian, Tracy Crawford, and John Haynes.

In honor of Decker, please consider donating to Meals on Wheels in his name.
<https://www.mealsonwheelsetx.org/ways-to-give/>

Previous Events

Visitation

APR **25**. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

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

Memorial Service

APR **25**. 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 James Decker Kennington



Stewart Family Funeral Home - April 25, 2025 at 02:07 PM

SA

Wonderful service Linda. So glad it was televised. Enjoyed hearing David and Bradley tell of their life with their Dad . I was doing OK until Bradley last few words. I know all who truly knew Decker loved him. I remember one night I was having trouble getting Tommy back to bed and he heard me up and helped me. 🥺

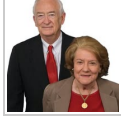
sydna sue allen - April 25, 2025 at 03:41 PM

JR

Uncle Decker was truly one of the finest of the Kennington family. His bold and sometimes thunderous voice was admired by all. I always loved talking with him and hearing his straightforward opinions of the American political system but most of all, he was a man of God who believed in eternal salvation and was never shy to tell anyone. I am honored to call him my uncle because of his genuine faith and unwavering love for the Christian life. I will always remember the time when I stopped by your home as I drove home from a business trip in Longview. It was the best cup of coffee ever because I got to spend a few moments with both of you. I treasure that time often and remember that there is only one Decker Kennington. Much love, peace, and comfort to all of you.

Jim Robertson

Jim Robertson - April 26, 2025 at 07:53 PM



Always friendly & greeted by name & saw him at church the Sunday before he was gone. Will miss him. Great picture! Carolyn Halbrooks Bain

Carolyn Bain - April 30, 2025 at 05:29 PM

BE

*“ My uncle Sonny Kennington say James was one of his best friends he has so many fond memories of running around with him back in the day
He still says James stole his girlfriend lol
he regrets not coming to see him before passing*

Bobbie Ellis - October 25, 2025 at 04:07 PM

DG

“ To the Kennington Family/Friends: It was an honor and a blessing to remember and celebrate Decker with you. I got to know Decker through our connection with P&G and Brookshire's. He modeled a great example to so many of faithful dedication and humble service. Decker pointed others to Jesus in word and deed. His living exemplified a courageous love and spirit that longs for one more person to turn to Jesus for new life and forever freedom that is found in God's Son (who died and rose again to save the penitent sinner). Decker's victory is in Jesus forever. I am thankful to know Decker and to enjoy the blessed assurance we share in Jesus.

Don Gaynier - April 25, 2025 at 05:18 PM

RM

“ Robertson & Ponder Families & Marie purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of James Decker Kennington.



Robertson & Ponder Families & Marie - April 25, 2025 at 11:50 AM

TS

“ Linda, this is Tom Sowell. Decker and I are cousins! I will never forget him, or the Kennington family His mother used to take care of me, a lot,, when I was young. I loved all the Kennington's and had great respect for Decker. God bless and peace and comfort! Tom Sowell

thomas wayne sowell - April 23, 2025 at 04:25 PM

DC

“ Linda:

Decker and I were in Sunday School Class together at First Baptist Church, Tyler, for many years. Decker was a true friend and dedicated Christian brother. We also talked on the phone a couple of times most weeks. He was fast to help others in need. As you know, he loved his family above all else in this world. First it was Christ his Savior and then his family. Prior to his health declining and chronic back trouble, he loved playing golf with friends. After retiring from Proctor and Gamble he would come to Men's Prayer Breakfast at First Baptist Church. T-Off time was always after Prayer breakfast. Decker also loved the family times at the beach and talked about them often. He is going to be missed in our Sunday School Class.

Decker was also a very regular visitor of members of the church who were in the hospital and nursing homes. Decker, Tom Henson, and Jim Gathright were the only ones, to my knowledge, who visited the veterans at the Veterans Home out near UT Health on Highway 271 on a regular basis.

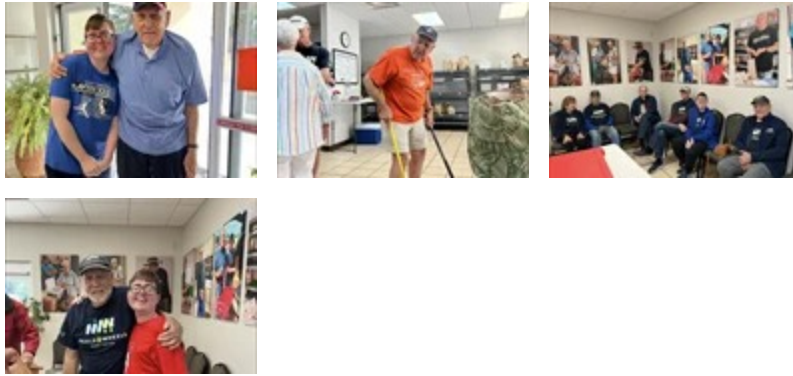
Betty and I will miss Decker, and our prayers will be with you and your family.

David Couch

David Couch - April 13, 2025 at 08:33 PM

KO

“ Linda, we are so sorry. We met Decker and you through Meals on Wheels. His first question was if I was a Christian. Then it was politics and family. He wanted to know “Kennys story” and after that he took us under his wings and a friendship was born! I don’t think I’ll ever park correctly again... if you know, you know 😭! We will miss his phone calls and pizza lunch dates! Kenny is just heartbroken . He was so proud of his children and grandchildren and talked about them often. He loved MOW and they have lost a wonderful volunteer and we have lost a dear friend. Well done good and faithful servant 💜



Kathy Odom - March 25, 2025 at 10:28 PM

BS

“ Linda, I first met Decker about 3 years ago at Meals On Wheels. When he learned that Wendy and I were fairly new to Tyler he welcomed us with a smile and an open heart. Over the past 3 years I learned a lot from Decker about Tyler and about our church. I always looked forward to seeing him because he was so friendly and he always had something interesting and challenging that he wanted to discuss. I was shocked when I learned that he was gone, and I will miss him. Bill Stephens

Bill Stephens - March 25, 2025 at 06:27 PM

BW

“ Linda and Family and Friends - It was a true blessing to count Decker as a friend. Decker was truly a model of a Christian servant. As you know so well but many of his friends may not know about the selfless and countless hours Decker (and you) devoted to helping Jim Gassaway in his later years and I mean doing "everything" to make his life better. Decker and you were great role models for Susan and myself and we were better so much better for knowing Decker and his servant heart. Looking forward to reuniting for eternity. Bill Wylie

Bill Wylie - March 24, 2025 at 11:24 AM

BY

“ Linda, this is Bill Yielding. I just want to pass on my thoughts and prayers to you and your family. Decker was a true friend and a great employee and everyone that knew him will miss him. God bless you and your family.

bill yielding - March 24, 2025 at 08:07 AM

WR

LINDA,IM WILLIE REDFORD I HAVE KNOWN DEKKER FOR OVER 20 YEARS AT MEALS ON WHEELS I LOVE HIM LIKE A BROTHER WHICH HE WAS IN CHRIST I WILL MISS HIM GREATLY AS I KNOW YOU WILL I SOLD BOTH YOUR SONS CARS IN THE PAST SO I MET THEM ALSO. GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

WILLIE REDFORD - April 18, 2025 at 02:18 PM

JW

“ Linda, so shocked over the passing of Decker. He was always a bright spot on Sunday mornings. I so enjoyed my time with him on the Senior committee. Always positive and upbeat. His earthly presence will be missed by everyone who knew him.

Joanne Williams - March 23, 2025 at 04:53 PM