



## John Oakley Childs

February 15, 1932 - August 18, 2020

John Oakley Childs of Tyler went to be with his savior on August 18, 2020 in the comfort of his home surrounded by his family. A memorial service will be held Thursday, August 20, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. in the Green Acres Baptist Church Chapel, with Dr. David Dykes, Rev. Warren Culwell, and Rev. Woody Woodward officiating. A private burial will take place prior to the service at Rose Hill Cemetery. On Wednesday, August 19, 2020, a viewing will be held from noon to 7:00 p.m. at Stewart Family Funeral Home.

Dukie was born and raised in Jacksonville, Texas. He was affectionately known to family as little brother, Dad, Pops and Ruff Ruff. Fish Childs entered Texas A & M in the Fall of 1949. His class, the Class of 1953. was the last class to live at the Annex. He graduated from Texas A & M College in Aug 1953 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering and has a Master's Degree in Personnel Administration from The George Washington University.

During his years at Texas A & M, Childs was a member of the corps of cadets, a terrific P Head, company commander of an all Fish Infantry Company and a senior yell leader. He was a charter member of the Memorial Student Center Student Committee.

One of his favorite stories went, as follows: "Not many people know of the time I "met" L.G. Dupree, Baylor's tough running back on the Baylor campus

the night before the Aggie football game, and the reason is that it was a stupid and naive thing to do and I praise God I was able to get out of Waco with my life and boots.”

Upon graduation from A & M, Dukie was commissioned a second lieutenant of Infantry in the Regular Army. Childs served over 21 years in the U.S. Army, primarily as an Infantry unit commander. He had two tours of duty in Viet Nam and commanded the 2nd Battalion of the 506th Airborne Infantry, 101st Airborne Division in combat. (This is the Battalion that was home to the “Band of Brothers” rifle company.) He was a qualified paratrooper, a Ranger and received several combat decorations including the Bronze Star for Valor and the Distinguished Flying Cross. John's military career culminated at West Texas State University in Canyon, Texas where he served as the Professor of Military Science. He retired as an Infantry Lieutenant Colonel in 1974.

In Canyon, John served as marketing officer for the First National Bank for four years. He was an active member of several civic organizations including serving as President of the Canyon Chamber of Commerce. In 1978, John and his family moved to Tyler, Texas where he was Senior Vice President for marketing at Heritage National Bank. In 1986, John began a new career as instructor in the School of Business and Director of Continuing Education at the University of Texas in Tyler. He retired as Business Officer of Jacksonville College in Jacksonville, Texas in 1994.

Civic organizations have been a top priority of service. He was a Rotarian for over forty years and served in two separate clubs, the Rotary Clubs of Canyon and Tyler. John served in various capacities at the club and district level and was District Governor of District 5830 in 1994-95. During that year, he initiated the first RYLA program for the District. He gained his nickname "One O'clock John" during his year as District Governor for the brevity of his speeches and desire that Rotary meetings be kept short and to the point. “One O'clock” John

was a top-notch instructor from 1996 to 2008 at the Lone Star Presidents Elect Training Seminar which was responsible for training Rotary Club Presidents for the state of Texas. He served as the Operating Chair for the Lone Star Presidents Elect Training Seminar in 2002. John also served as president of the Smith County American Cancer Society and served on the following boards: Goodwill Industries of East Texas, Tyler-Smith County A & M Club, East Texas Deaf and Hearing Council and the Tyler Independent School District. John was also on the Board of Trustees of East Texas Baptist University in Marshall, past board member of San Marcos Baptist Academy, and the Paraguay Baptist Hospital Foundation.

Dukie was an active member of Green Acres Baptist Church where he served as a deacon and taught a large adult Sunday school class for over forty years.

Family was a priority to John, He married Thelma Ruth Stephens of Leesville, Louisiana, The Love Of His Life. They have three sons, John Oakley Childs Jr., a special needs boy who is cared for by the state of Louisiana, Stephen (Brenda) of Tyler, and Charlie (Lisa) of Kingwood. There are six grandchildren, Allison, Brian (Allie), Hannah, Catherine of Houston, Clint (Brittany) of Tyler, Chris (Jessica) of Alexandria Va.; and two great-grandsons, Oakley Childs of Alexandria Va. and Sam Childs of Houston.

John (little brother) loved his sisters, Peggy Ann Morrison of Fort Worth and Nancy Loper of Tyler; as well as four nephews and 3 nieces.

John Oakley liked to make memories, such as taking his grandsons to every game of the last season southwest conference, no matter what the weather. Cooking sausages on the ashes of the Aggie Bonfire early in the morning cannot be forgotten. Christmas was a magical time as family gathered for the annual John Childs scavenger hunt. This came complete with clues created

by Pops and placed goodness knows where. Our responsibility was to solve the clues and find the treasure. You can imagine the chaos!

John, Johnny, Dukie, Dad, Uncle John, Pops, One O'clock John, no matter how you knew him he was never boring!! Heaven got a good one.

In lieu of flowers the family would greatly appreciate any memorial to The Hospice of East Texas Foundation, 4111 University Blvd., Tyler, Texas 75707 or Green Acres Baptist Church Foundation, 1607 Troup Hwy, Tyler, Texas 75701.

Gig Em!

# Cemetery Details

**Private Burial**

## Previous Events

### Viewing

AUG **19**. 12:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

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

### Memorial Service

AUG **20**. 2:00 PM (CT)

Green Acres Baptist Church - Chapel  
1607 Troup Hwy  
Tyler, TX 75701

# Tribute Wall



“ *Stewart Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of John Oakley Childs*



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**Stewart Family Funeral Home** - August 19, 2020 at 12:34 PM

EB

“ *John was one of those few special people that God gifts us with that is always a friend, even when you first meet him. He made us proud with his Aggie charm and humor, sharing stories and life advice that brought smiles. God bless John and his family, as he is a loss on this earth but a win for our lord Jesus Christ and all in Heaven. Gig' em John.*

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**Edward Broussard** - August 24, 2020 at 09:59 AM

JS

“ *.Clint, Nancy, and other family members:*

*My sincere condolences on the loss of "Dukie" Childs. I never knew him, but from reading his obituary, I can see what I missed. What an impact he had! My thoughts are with you during this time.*

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**John Sims** - August 22, 2020 at 06:03 PM



“ John Oakley was "one of a kind". He taught my parents Sunday morning Bible study class and provided a wonderful, caring ministry for all class members. I know Jesus welcomed him with "well done, good & faithful servant". Prayers for TR and family!  
Sharon Kay Howell

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**Sharon Howell** - August 20, 2020 at 04:06 PM



“ Being around was like a breathe of sunshine. Thelma, know you will miss him as will all of us. Do you still want to look for rental houses, as I think this was primarily your idea?  
Dave & Carolyn Bain

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**Carolyn Bain** - August 20, 2020 at 01:56 PM



“ Still remember how his volleyball team always beat ours in the finals! We sure had lots of fun, though. We are praying for God's comfort for the family.

Vicki Walker

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**Vicki** - August 19, 2020 at 08:27 PM

DY

“ I was saddened to hear about John. My thoughts are with Thelma Ruth and the family. I have known John from banking, printing, and he taught for us part-time at The University of Texas at Tyler. Students loved his classes. I will miss him at the Olympic Center gym. He was amazing with his sense of humor.



John was kind, compassionate, and so funny. He and I talked regularly about A&M vs. the Razorbacks. I will miss him, as he was a delight and one-of-a-kind.

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Dr. Marilyn Young - August 19, 2020 at 02:41 PM

MA

“ John Oakley Childs was, indeed, one of a kind! He, as the saying goes, "never met a stranger". I have known him, his parents, and sisters, Nancy and Peggy Ann, almost all my life, and, his beloved wife, Thelma Ruth, after they married. Living in Jacksonville, his home town, I would occasionally see him and Thelma Ruth in Tyler, usually in the Trinity Mother Frances cafeteria where I might eat lunch when visiting a hospitalized friend. He and Thelma Ruth were always so very friendly and full of family news for me. The Oakley and Peggy Childs family has been a very treasured part of my life and I am saddened to see the news of this loss for their family. I know them to be a family of deep faith which I pray will sustain each one now and in the days that lie ahead - may God bless and keep each one of you! Mary Alice (Pid Bone) Adamson



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Mary Alice Adamson - August 19, 2020 at 01:30 PM

TD

“ One O’Clock John was the Heart of Rotary in Tyler and served his nation, his school, his community, our world and our God in many ways. His example of living a life of service above self has been an inspiration for all that have followed him in service to Rotary International District 5830. Anne and I treasure the mentoring and support that Thelma Ruth and John provided as we prepared to serve.

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**Tom DeWitt** - August 19, 2020 at 11:47 AM

DF

“ Doug Moreland and Family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of John Oakley Childs.



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**Doug Moreland and Family** - August 19, 2020 at 08:20 AM

CH

“ John Oakey was my "Texas " cousin  
Eventhough my family lived in Philadelphia we were close. We took many trips to Texas. The last time we were all together was about 4 years ago.  
I treasure that memory . My heart is sad  
Praying for Thelma Ruth , Steven, Charlie & his sisters  
Carole Hughes

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**Carole Hughes** - August 19, 2020 at 07:39 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of John Oakley Childs.*



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August 19, 2020 at 01:00 AM



“ *Here! Ridley Briggs '54*

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**E. Ridley Briggs** - August 18, 2020 at 10:24 PM



“ *John and Thelma Ruth are the pillars we have all relied on! What an incredible legacy he leaves! May God comfort the family and May treasured memories fill your heart! We were blessed to know him!*  
*Carye and Jim Gillen*

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**Carye Gillen** - August 18, 2020 at 09:34 PM



“ *The first time I met John made quite an impression on me. He burst into my office in shorts and a tee shirt doing an Aggie yell! It was 1989 and I had only been working for Jim Wrght a short time. We became fast friends and he dubbed me "Double E", which he would call out every time he came in the door. When I told him my sister Cindy had cancer, he took my hands and prayed or her right then in my office.*  
*He was a dear man and I loved him as I do Thelma Ruth.*

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**Elaine Eubanks** - August 18, 2020 at 06:53 PM

MR

“ John Oakley was our Sunday School teacher for several years. One could tell he spent many hours delving into the subject he was teaching for the Sunday hour. In 2nd Samuel chapter 9 there is the name Mephibosheth. That's a mouthful--right? A few days ago my husband Tom and I were smiling on how John Oakley could dash off that name with out a hitch. Tom and I have to think it through before we can even say it once. What a Bible teacher John was...

.....now though he has sung this song by Chris Tomlin:

"I will rise when He calls my name. No more sorrow, no more pain. I will rise on eagles's wings before my God, Fall on my knees and rise."

He has met JESUS face to face !

Melba and Tom Randall

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Melba and Tom Randall - August 18, 2020 at 04:29 PM