



## Martha May Leewright

May 21, 1922 - May 21, 2013

A Memorial service for Martha Leewright, 91, of DeSoto, formerly of Tyler, will be held on Friday, May 24, 2013 at 1:30 PM at Stewart Family Funeral Home Chapel with Rev. Ken Brumley and Rev. Michael Smith officiating.

A private burial will be held at Rose Hill Cemetery under the direction of Stewart Family Funeral Home.

Mrs. Leewright passed away May 21, 2013 on her 91st birthday, with her children by her side.

She was born May 21, 1922 in Mason City, IA to James and Harriett Scoville Demos.

Martha and her husband Bill were the founders of Leewrights Hallmark Stores and entrepreneurs since 1954. She enjoyed traveling with family and friends, was an avid bridge player and was at her happiest when she was spending time with her children and grandchildren. Martha was an active member of First Presbyterian Church for many years, later becoming a member of GABC where she was active in the singles department. Most recently she became a member of First United Methodist of Duncanville. Martha was extremely proud of her Greek heritage.

Martha was preceded in death by her parents, husband William "Bill" Leewright and sisters, Mary Eland, Tina Balabon and Helen Borger.

She is survived by her loving family including her children, Larry J. Leewright and wife Rose of Houston, Bruce Leewright and wife Tammie of Tyler and Phyllis A. Smith and husband Michael of DeSoto; siblings, Anna Schultz and

Chris Demos; grandchildren, Jennifer Werner and husband Elon, Amy Smith Edwards and husband Chad, Robert Leewright, Leslie Tracy and husband Thomas, LeAnna Martin and husband Rickey, Jason Leewright, Cody Tarver and wife Whitney and Amber Smith and husband Justin; and by great-grandchildren, Abby and Nick Werner, Ramona and Isaac Edwards, Benjamin, Samuel and Elliot Tracy, Jonathan, Joshua and Caleb Martin, Elena and Colin Tarver and Keller and Colman Smith.

Honorary pallbearers will be Rickey Martin, Robert Leewright, Thomas Tracy, Elon Werner, Chad Edwards and Joe Mabry.

# Cemetery Details

## Rose Hill Cemetery

2400 S. Donnybrook  
Tyler, TX 75702

# Previous Events

## Mem. Service

MAY **24**. 1:30 PM (CT)

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

# Tribute Wall



“ *Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Martha May Leewright.* ”



---

May 23, 2013 at 01:25 PM



“ *Larry: Sorry to read about your mother's passing.* ”

---

**Stanley Waghalter, class of '65** - May 23, 2013 at 10:24 AM



*Waghalter, class of '65*

---

**Stanley Waghalter, class of '65** - May 23, 2013 at 10:25 AM

GR

“ My grandma was a wonderful lady. I remember growing up and they (Martha/Bill or Grandma/Grandpa) always had customers that would call her by name, spend an hour in the store to buy a card and another 30mins talking to her at the register. She made Leewright's Gift & China; yes I said China because it use to be popular to collect. Leewright's was a place where customers felt welcome and each one was treated like they were going to be her last. People always asked her for assistance and she always had the answer. She taught me how to make bows and wrap gifts better than Santa's elves. She was the reason for the great success of Leewright's stores. When she was out of the business it started down hill. Loyal customers for years left and shopped elsewhere due to they just weren't treated the way my grandma treated them. The dynamic was no where close to the same. There were several contributions' to that as the employees loved her as well.



My grandma was the first person I knew to have a wireless remote console TV. Now the remote was like holding a brick, but it was first class I'm telling you. No channel box with wires and no getting up to change the channel. I was given that TV when I left to go to TSTC in Waco in 1992. When it finally went out well over 15+yrs old at this point I gutted it out, and made it into an aquarium and hauled it from apartment to apartment finally landing in a rent house. I did eventually get rid of it around 2001.

I returned to Tyler in 2010. I had completed a job for a very nice lady and she started to ask me a question. I already knew what it was going to be. "Are you kin to the Leewright's Store(s)?" Nope I was partially wrong. She said "Are you kin to Martha Leewright ?" I said "yes ma'am I am; she is my grandmother." She looked at me and said what most people don't know, she said "They had that upholstery and curtain business." I said "yes ma'am they sure did." She looked me dead in the eye and said "those are some good people." I said "indeed". I sat there for almost 2hrs talking to her.

*I then told her my grandpa had just about every tool Sears had back then and everything had it's place. I told her my grandpa built me a sporty wooden box car that even had a brake for my 7th birthday. (my sisters boys still play with it when they are in town) I told her how my grandpa taught me how to swing a hammer and actually drive a nail vs. just destroy stuff with it. I told her my grandma was the first to put on me a band-aid when I missed and smashed my finger. I told her if you could think it up my grandpa could build it better than what you had in mind. I told her how my grandma used to have all sorts of flavored popcorn. I think that's why I don't like popcorn today because she burned me out. I remember my grandpa and grandma loved planters peanuts in a jar. They would unscrew the lid and pour some in. Oh I would take my time not to get cut off by sucking all the salt off then eating them one at a time. Then at holidays always had a nut bowl with a variety of nuts, but you had to shell your own. She taught me depending on the nut where to line up the hand cracker to pop it open and not smash the nut.*

*My grandma was a Bridge queen. (that would be equivalent to you mahjongg lovers) She taught me how to play Rummy, Spades, and Backgammon. I'm sure I'm rusty but after a few hands and some rule refreshments' you wouldn't stand a chance. Now my grandpa ping pong was his game. If you won it was because he let you. Life lesson I received there was when I use to go to pool halls and play for money. Let them win the first one, and maybe the second. Then up the stakes and play them double or nothing. Set mercy aside and whip the fire out of them and get that money back 2-3 fold. Ok, maybe I should of left that part out, but I needed the money because my mom was trying to get me through school and grants and loans take longer to get than a Friday and Saturday night. The point though is they both enjoyed a wide variety of games and were usually very good at all of them.*

*My grandma us*

GR

*Continued: My grandma use to take me to Houston to my Uncle Larry, Aunt Rose's, to see my cousins Robert and Leslie in the summer. I remember her driving 80-90mph telling me it's good to "cleaner out" every now and then. Think that's what led me towards racing growing up. It was so much fun.*

*If you never met my grandma you need to look her up when you get to the pearly gates, because you missed out on one fantastic, compassionate, strict at times, but a wonderful, loving woman.*

*Vaya con Dios Grandma! Grandpa will be glad to see you!*

*Love, Jason*

---

**Grandson** - May 23, 2013 at 12:27 AM

PS

*Thank you so much Jason. I can tell how much you loved her. Love, Aunt Phyllis*

---

**Phyllis Smith** - May 27, 2013 at 11:24 AM