



## Phillip Phelps

June 1, 1936 - May 23, 2006

On Tuesday, May 23, 2006 one of the Lord's more remarkable servants, Phil Phelps, age 69 of Tyler, Texas was called home after a courageous and lengthy illness. Phil Phelps, known to his family and numerous friends, as "Pepe" was beloved, cherished and honored as a man of values, integrity and honesty. Rare do we find a man who has lived by the values that he professes. Phil Phelps not only talked of God's love, his life and family are living proof of the Lord's blessings. Born June 1, 1936 to the late Joe and Ann Phelps, Phil grew up on the east side of Hamilton, Ohio. Instilled with hard work, uncommon common sense and a gift of humor, Phil's youth gave him a foundation to appreciate what he had and what he learned, traits that would serve him throughout his life. Practical, motivated and humble Phil Phelps saw a purpose with his life, found his calling and made the most of his gifts. In high school all of the qualities of Phil's youth made him a natural leader. In 1954 as co-captain of his team, Phil helped guide the legendary Hamilton High Big Blue basketball team to its third state championship. In a day and age when high school sports ruled and its heroes lionized, Phil remained humble keeping all he had accomplished in proper perspective. Leaving Hamilton High Mr. Phelps attended the University of Kentucky, graduating with a degree in Electrical Engineering. Phil continued his prowess on the basketball floor playing for another "big blue" team under a coach by the name of Adolph Rupp. Surviving Mr. Phelps is his high school sweetheart and wife of nearly 51 years, Marti Craft formerly of Hamilton. Starting a young family then later a

business, Marti & Phil forged a marriage of strong faith & love and a remarkable tenacity for business. Side by side for over 50 years Marti stood with Phil for all the wonderful times and those that weren't as easy. Through numerous family moves and career advances Marti and Phil centered on two absolutes: love of family and faith in the Lord. A lesson not lost on their children. In addition to his beloved wife are two wonderful children, daughter-in-law and son-in-law. Son Jeff and his wife Jill of Tyler and daughter Marta Kay and her husband Steve also of Tyler. In 1960 Mr. Phelps joined Schlumberger Well Service moving his young family to Corpus Christi, Texas. A dedicated employee for over 17 years, Mr. Phelps excelled and advanced with Schlumberger with moves to Victoria, Brownfield, Houston and Shreveport, Louisiana before settling in Tyler Texas in the mid-seventies. In 1977 Mr. Phelps partnered and helped begin MP Industries, Inc. The company soon became a vital economic success in Tyler and throughout the state. So much so that in a few years MP Industries, Inc. was honored with the Small Business Award for the State of Texas. This spring MP Industries held a grand celebration to mark the beginning of its 30th year in operation. The company was also recognized by national politicians, in 1988 Democratic Presidential Nominee, Michael Dukakis officially kicked off his Texas campaign along with Lloyd Bentsen at MP Industries, a signal of the company's tremendous success in Tyler and within the oil industry. For 30 years Phil Phelps was an active Deacon at Green Acres Baptist Church. Along with teaching and directing the youth Sunday school program, Mr. Phelps sponsored numerous youth camp trips while serving as the Dean of Men. Touching the lives of so many young people, Mr. Phelps was an active coach for Green Acres' softball teams, reaching the state playoffs on several occasions. He also coached his grandchildren in the church's summer basketball league. In each of these capacities, Phil Phelps showed by example and led by the same. The lives of so many young men and women are forever intertwined with the wit, humor and common sense of the man they all called Pepe. Mr. Phelps served in the community teaching Junior Achievement for 15 year and served as president

of Crime Stoppers for 2 years. Mr. Phelps was a dedicated blood donor at the Stewart Blood Bank becoming a member of the 200 Gushers Club. On Mondays, Mr. Phelps was often at local hospitals visiting friends and church family giving them the comfort of prayer and the relief of a quick joke or a flash of his unforgettable smile. It was these visitations that Mr. Phelps treasured as much as anything he ever did. In 2004 at his 50th high school class reunion, Mr. Phelps organized an active prayer chain for his former classmates. Throughout his life, Mr. Phelps gave to others this was central to who he was. Each Sunday his children, grandchildren along with their friends would gather in the warmth and welcome smile of Pepe's home. The grandchildren became interwoven in all things that happened in Mr. Phelps' life and for this they have been blessed. Pepe's surviving grandchildren are: Kelli Fitzpatrick Armstrong (Blake), Jayme Fitzpatrick, Maggie Fitzpatrick, Matt Phelps and Neill Phelps all of Tyler. His brother Norman and his wife Janet of Dataw, South Carolina, also survive Mr. Phelps. Two sisters-in-law Mary Law (Richard) of Hamilton and Shirley Prather (Bill) of Evansville, Indiana. Six nephews who adored their Uncle Phil also survive him: Scott Adams (Kim) and Sean Adams all of Evansville, Indiana. Rick Law (Bev) of Hamilton, Ohio, Greg Law (Kim) of Wilmington, Ohio, Seth Phelps (Charis) of Jacksonville, Florida and Scott Phelps (Gina) of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Pallbearers for Mr. Phelps will include: Ken Dance, Dale Eppler, Harold Lee, James Milstead, Jerry Morris and Larry Price. Honorary Pallbearers are the Deacons of Green Acres Baptist Church. In lieu of flowers the family request donations to the Green Acres Youth Department or the charity of your choice. In the final year of his life there were two significant events that provided Mr. Phelps tremendous joy in days of tremendous pain. The birth of his only great-grandchild, Avery Craft Armstrong gave Pepe a burst of joy and energy as a new life came to his family. Another life for him to touch. He cherished little Avery who in turn with her precious smile gave him comfort, hope and immeasurable happiness. The second event occurred this past February when Mr. Phelps was at long last

recognized for his athletic ability on the hardwood. Inducted into the Hamilton High Athletic Hall of Fame, Mr. Phelps was honored for his leadership of the '54 State Champions as well as his 268 career points placing him 32nd on the all time scoring list of the old Big Blue. The induction ceremony on Mr. Phelps final visit to his hometown encapsulated all that was important to him. Not the athletic achievements of his life, but those who surrounded him in his life. In an emotional speech, Mr. Phelps insisted on naming every family member in attendance. Reading over 40 names, Mr. Phelps celebrated the gathering of those who had come to celebrate the joy, life and athletic success of the man who had given them so much. While other inductees thanked coaches and teachers for their athletic accomplishments, Mr. Phelps thanked his family for their love, steadfastness and support of him not as an athlete, but as husband, father, grandfather, brother, brother-in-law, uncle and great-grandfather. For Phil Phelps it was a final testament to the richness of his life. The family will receive friends from 6-8 P.M., Friday at Stewart Family Funeral Home, 7525 Old Jacksonville Hwy., south Tyler. Funeral services are scheduled for 10:00 a.m. Saturday, May 27, 2006 in the Chapel of Green Acres Baptist Church with Rev. Dr. David Dykes, Rev. Bob Billups, and Dr. Paul Powell officiating. Private burial will be held at Cathedral in the Pines in Tyler, Texas under the direction of Stewart Family Funeral Home. Abraham Lincoln once said, "in the end it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years." Phil Phelps had: Fifty-one years of marriage. Athletic ability. Educational achievement. Business success. Love of family. Love for your neighbor. And an unshakable faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Phil Phelps had a life well lived. A life that counted. More importantly, a life to remember. For more information or to express condolences, visit [www.stewartfamilyfuneral.com](http://www.stewartfamilyfuneral.com).

# Tribute Wall

DM

“ Dear Marti & family,

*I was very saddened today to learn of Phil's passing. I remember my mom always getting letters from you guys & seeing you at mam-maws house during the summer. I remember always getting Christmas cards with Jeff's & Marta Kay's picture on them in their pajamas. Time goes so quickly and we need to always remember that Jesus is in charge. I always loved Uncle Joe & Aunt Anne so much & they were always so good to me when I would see them in Ohio or Kentucky.*

*God bless all of you & you are in our prayers here at our home.*

*Debbie*

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**Debbie Cole McGee** - May 23, 2006 at 12:00 AM

BD

“ *Phil was our friend and the friend of our children who always felt loved by him. We did also and we will miss him. The best tribute to Phil that we will do is to continue to love Marti and the whole family. That won't be hard. It was an honor to call him our friend. Love, Ken and Bobbie*

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**Bobbie Dance** - May 23, 2006 at 12:00 AM

GP

“ *Marti and Family, Thinking of you in your loss. May the promise of eternal life be a comfort to you in the loss of one so dear. I know you have so many happt and wonderful memories. My most recent one is seeing him and talking to him at our 50th. class reunion. Take care and God be with you all.*

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**Gerri (Begley) Pike** - May 23, 2006 at 12:00 AM

JW

“ Thinking of you in your time of sorrow...  
Our sympathy and prayer to you all.  
Sincerely,  
Jan and Kelly Walker

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**Jan Walker** - May 23, 2006 at 12:00 AM

CF

“ I'll always remember the good times and the fun we had. You took time for us young guys and made us feel important. There was the time in Kokomo, Indiana when we were uptown and you told a gang of town people that I was the famous Boo Ellis. It was fun! Was nice being there when you were around! Thanks, Cfan

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**Claude Fant** - May 23, 2006 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ My sympathy goes to Mr. Phelps' entire family, especially his grandchildren. Growing up in Tyler and at GABC, the family was always a familiar site at church and El Charro! I also had the pleasure of being in Mr. Phelps' Sunday School class and DiscipleNow home. My thoughts and love are with you at this time.

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**Jennifer Mackey** - May 23, 2006 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ What a friend we had in Phil. He was an example of a true servant of Jesus. We will miss him greatly. Your lost is in our hearts and our prayers are for your strenght and knowledge that Jesus made us a promise that we will all be at his table and I hold on to that promise. We love you each so very much and thank you for sharing Phil with us.

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**Jane Craig** - May 23, 2006 at 12:00 AM

DO

“ We regret that we will be out of town during Phill's services. We want to express our sincere condolences during this special time. We loved Phill and will always remember him as a true brother and believer. To God be the Glory.

*Love, Dennis and Gloria*

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**Dennis and Gloria Ortega** - May 23, 2006 at 12:00 AM

BJ

“ Dear Marti and family,

*I was so saddened to learn of Phil's passing. The obituary in the Hamilton Journal News was a beautiful tribute to Phil and well deserved. I remeber Phil just as he was described....loving, kind, considerate, a gentlemen, compassionate, etc.*

*I remember the love you two shared in your high school years and beyond...it was always a joy to be around both of you because of the love you shared and how wonderful it was to observe how you treated each other and everyone else.*

*I know it is a great loss to you and your family, but also know that with your wonderful faith and knowledge of God's will you will be blessed with his wonderful memories.*

*You are in our thoughts and prayers.*

*Much love...your old friend,*

*Betty (Woo Woo-Houck) Jones*

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**Betty Lou (Houck) Jones** - May 23, 2006 at 12:00 AM

AC

“ Mrs. Phelps,

*Just wanted to let you know how sorry I am to hear about the loss of Mr. Phelps. We will miss him here at ETMC. I will never forget the time I had to put the strip on his forehead to take his O2. You guys were so sweet, loving and caring. I will miss seeing you guys. I will keep you in my prayers and so will all the other nurses and PCA's on 6 South. I will not be able to attend to the funeral, but you will be in my thoughts. May God Bless you!*

*PCA (6 South),  
Amber*

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**Amber Cook** - May 23, 2006 at 12:00 AM

LJ

“ *Everyone has a story to tell about how this man and his family loved them and touched their lives. Phil is still touching our family by meals and words shared in the past, hugs given in love, and time to listen and never judge. You are so missed and so loved...Kim,Larry, Courtney, Adam, Casey, Adam, & Cody and all the grandkids who will soon know you by our stories of your love for life.*

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**Larry & Kim Jones** - May 23, 2006 at 12:00 AM

KH

“ Dear family members: Thank you for sharing so wonderfully in words the life and loves of Phil in the article of remembrance about him in this morning's paper. We feel fortunate to have known him. We especially know the Fitzpatrick family and love them and grieve with them as they feel his loss. We send you our sympathy and love. Regrettably, we are leaving for Minnesota today and will not be able to attend services to celebrate Phil's life and walk with Jesus. We pray that you will be comforted during this time by the members of His body through their words and deeds. Blessings to all, Karen and Bob Hampton

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**Karen and Bob Hampton** - May 23, 2006 at 12:00 AM