



Rusty Hightower

January 15, 1964 - May 29, 2021

A Celebration of the Life of Jack “Rusty” Russell Hightower, 57, of Tyler will be held on Thursday, June 3, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. at Marvin United Methodist Church in Tyler with Dr. Doug Baker officiating under the direction of Stewart Family Funeral Home.

Mr. Hightower made his way home to heaven on Saturday, May 29, 2021, in Tyler, Texas following a lengthy illness. He was born January 15, 1964, in Tyler, Texas to Sue Ann and Dick Hightower.

Rusty was a lifelong member of Marvin United Methodist Church and a longtime member of the Trinity Sunday School class. He graduated from Robert E. Lee High School in 1982. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from The University of Texas at Austin in 1986, where he was a member of the Longhorn varsity football team, Kappa Alpha Fraternity, and the UT Silver Spurs. For most of his professional career, Rusty was an Executive in healthcare medical supplies distribution and served as a board member of the Federation of American Hospitals. He served the community in various capacities, including as a member of the Board of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, a volunteer for the Hiway 80 Rescue Mission, and a volunteer for the Salvation Army Food Truck Delivery. Rusty was the epitome of a family man. He adored his children and was always present in all of their activities. He is and will be remembered for his unwavering faith, his sense of humor, his

charisma and charm, and sincere empathy for others.

Rusty was preceded in death by his parents, Sue Ann and Dick Hightower, and his brother-in-law, Son Fulgham. He is survived by his loving family including his children, Zach Hightower and Zach's wife, Christina, Hannah Hightower and her fiancé, Jarrod McCabe, and Lily Hightower; his sister, Wendy Walker and husband, Cullom; his brother, Patrick Hightower and wife, Sabrina; his nephews, Jack Fulgham and fiancée Lauren Leihgeber, Cullom Walker, IV and wife, Kinnon, and Gill Walker; his nieces, Hallye Reynolds and husband, Bayne, Samantha Fulgham, Gwin Walker, Erin Richter and husband, Lee, Katie Bird and husband Kyle.

Honorary pallbearers will be Chris Jones, Ken Townsend, Kevin Thomas, Mike Crawford, Marshall Brown, Greg Fairley, Steve Eargle, Stan Riley, Don Garrett, John Thompson, Tom Steele, Chris Woldert, Scott Knight, Bryan Forman, and Jeff Jenkins.

Following the service, the family will receive visitors at a reception in Pirtle Hall.

If desired, memorials may be made to Hospice of East Texas, 4111 University Blvd., Tyler, Texas 75701 (<https://www.hospiceofeasttexas.org>).

Previous Events

Service

JUN 3. 2:00 PM (CT)

Marvin Methodist Church Sanctuary
300 W Erwin St
Tyler, TX 75702
(903) 592-7396

Visitation

JUN 3. 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

Marvin Methodist Church Sanctuary
300 W Erwin St
Tyler, TX 75702
(903) 592-7396

Tribute Wall



“ Stewart Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Rusty Hightower



Stewart Family Funeral Home - June 02, 2021 at 01:17 PM

TG

“ TURNER GASSAWAY lit a candle in memory of Rusty Hightower



TURNER GASSAWAY - August 06, 2021 at 10:05 PM

TG

Rusty and I were pledge brothers at UT. I will always remember his infectious smile and ebullient personality. I'm only sorry that we never got a chance to reconnect before his death. He was a great guy with an oversized heart. His pledge brothers and I will miss him!

TURNER GASSAWAY - August 06, 2021 at 10:10 PM

KR

“ Dear Hightower families,
My thoughts and prayers for all of you in the days and weeks to come. What a wonderful legacy he left within the hearts of all!
Kimberly Reed

Kimberly Reed - June 03, 2021 at 01:44 AM



“ *Heart's Companion Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rusty Hightower.*



June 02, 2021 at 10:09 PM



“ *Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Rusty Hightower.*



June 02, 2021 at 05:00 PM

AN

“ June 1, 2021

A Memory of True Friends

I have countless memories of Rusty and the guys, the buddies, the band of brothers... Their bond together began in the fourth grade or before. The group didn't have a name or membership requirements. It seems to have included those who happened to be there at the time. But there is no doubt, any of them... ALL of them would have gone to war for the sake of any one of them. Some of them did. All of them still would.

But, the night I remember didn't call upon Rusty to go to war for his friend. War is HELL, this was too. This call was just to be there. To come with one other and just be there. To be there when, with tears in his eyes, the father of another one of the buddies, would say, "I don't know if he can make it through the night." Sometimes, just being there can be almost as tough as being in a foxhole. This was that kind of night. But, when the sun came up, they were still there, loving, supporting, caring, and they never stopped.

Now, on Thursday, there will be a gathering in honor of Jack "Rusty" Russell Hightower, the whole group, or most of them, will attend. If you ask them why they came, they will tell you, "because, it is important just to be here."

Anonymous - June 02, 2021 at 04:13 PM



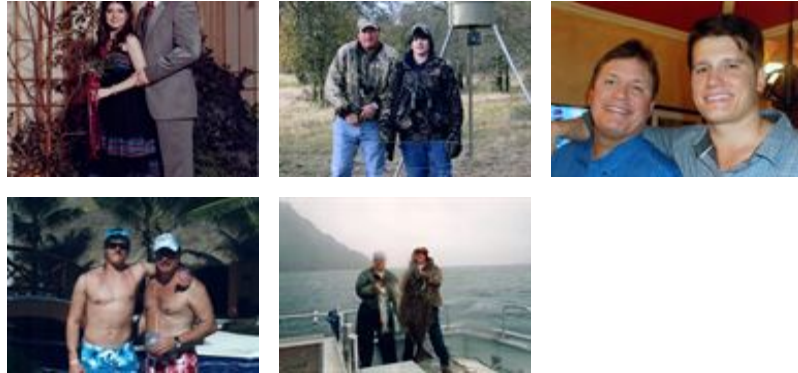
“ *Serenity Wreath was purchased for the family of Rusty Hightower.*



June 02, 2021 at 02:52 PM



“ 78 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Stewart Family Funeral Home - June 02, 2021 at 01:08 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of *Rusty Hightower*.



June 01, 2021 at 10:32 PM



“ *Lisa And Gary Gross* lit a candle in memory of *Rusty Hightower*



Lisa and Gary Gross - June 01, 2021 at 09:49 PM



“ *Delightful Dieffenbachia was purchased for the family of Rusty Hightower.*



June 01, 2021 at 08:56 PM



“ *Delightful Dieffenbachia was purchased for the family of Rusty Hightower.*



June 01, 2021 at 08:54 PM



“ *Delightful Dieffenbachia was purchased for the family of Rusty Hightower.*



June 01, 2021 at 08:52 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rusty Hightower.*



June 01, 2021 at 04:58 PM

TF

“ *The Easter Family purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Rusty Hightower.*



The Easter Family - June 01, 2021 at 11:06 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Rusty Hightower.*



May 31, 2021 at 04:44 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Rusty Hightower.*



May 31, 2021 at 02:31 PM

FF

“ *Rusty and I spent many hours together both at work or over dinners. The one thing we always consumed our conversations was our children. As you know was a UT grad and player. However, Zach went to A&M, Hannah to OK and Lily to AR. Me I'm a BAMA guy yet my daughter went to LSU. We both laughed, maybe one too many Hook'em Horns or Roll Tide. There is not a book for Father's For Dummies but if that's the outcome, we did OK. See you again my brother from another mother. Much Love FreddieB*

Frederick Bloomfield, Freddie - May 30, 2021 at 10:49 PM

ES

I echo Freddie Bloomfield's thoughts as I, like him, worked many years with Rusty and boy were those times fun. And, yes, the conversations at dinner always led to our families where, me, the die hard Aggie, would always give Rusty the hardest time when his children decided to go to UT rival schools. I loved it!

Well, guess who was the first to "congratulate" me when my son got accepted and went to UT...man, we laughed so hard!

The smile that you see in the picture is one of his traits that I will remember about Rusty. I visited with him 2 weeks ago today for about an hour at the hospital in Dallas when he already knew his fate and we talked about family again. We talked about some of the things he will "miss out" on here in our world (weddings and grand babies), we talked about work, we talked about UT, we talked about some mischievous activity in his younger days (thanks Kevin T for prompting me to ask), and after our convo, he said he was tired of fighting and was ready, very ready to meet our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. He did all this while maintaining as much as possible, his smile and sense of humor. Rusty might be gone from us physically, but as long as we remember him, talk about him and keep him in our hearts, he will always be with us, providing that awesome smile.

Smile on Rusty....until we meet again to discuss family, UT and A&M football and all things that are important to us. Thanks for being such a good person and an even better friend!

Hook 'Em!

enrique sanabria - June 01, 2021 at 11:21 PM