



Donald Retzlaff

APR 16, 1926 - JAN 15, 2013



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RETZLAFF, DONALD Don “Tiny” Retzlaff was born April 16, 1926, in Houston, Texas, to Emma Christine and Frank Retzlaff in Houston, Texas. He was their third child, preceded by his sister Adleta and a brother Frank. Don passed away in Greenville, Texas after a long illness on Tuesday, January 15th, 2013. He was 86. Don joined the US Army Air Force in 1944 and served until he was honorably discharged in 1946. It was in the army where he received his initial Electronics training. After leaving the army, he worked a variety of electronics-related jobs, including a Radio Engineer at the Dallas radio station KIXL. In 1947 he met his wife Norma Jean Gentry. After a long courtship, they were married on June 17, 1949. They loved to take trips and they had traveled all over the United States and Canada. They enjoyed going to three World’s Fairs. In later years, they were able to go on several cruises, including one for their 50th wedding anniversary. They both had an endearing love for cats; their pride actually grew to fourteen at one point while living in West Tawakoni. He lost Norma after a long illness in 2002. In 1951, he started his career at Texas Instruments, Incorporated, in Dallas, working as an Electrical Engineer until he retired in 1983. After his retirement from Texas Instruments, Don and Norma moved to the Arrowhead Community in West Tawakoni. In over a year’s time, he built their retirement home with the help of several friends. He continued his active lifestyle in retirement. From 1985 to 1986, he served as Mayor of the city of West Tawakoni. From 1987 to 1991 he was a city councilman. In 1995 to 1996, he again served as Mayor, much to the surprise and objections of Norma. From 1989 to 1995 he served as Commissioner of the Hunt County Lake Tawakoni Planning Commission. Starting in 1995 he was an Electrical Inspector for the city of Quinlan. Don’s son sparked his dad’s interest in writing later in life and gave him encouragement to first write about his thirty year career at Texas Instruments. The results was the book “Texas Instruments and Me” published in 2006. With further prompting from his son, he



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then wrote the book “Cousin Emma” in 2007 about the life of his mother. He had the writing bug then, and he wrote “My Memories of the YMCA and Camp Piomingo”. Up until his death, he was working on his most extensive writing project, his autobiography. Don touched many lives in his eighty-six years, and we believe all were for the better. The world became more special with Don in it. He will be greatly missed by many. He is survived by his son, Donald Alan Retzlaff; his daughter-in-law, Elisa Lynn Echols Retzlaff; his niece and nephew, Mary Chris Laminack and Frank Hall Retzlaff, and his constant companion, Deanna Medlin. Visitation will be from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM, Friday, January 18, 2013 at Restland Funeral Home. Funeral services will be held at 12:00 PM, January 19 at First United Methodist Church in Quinlan, TX and a graveside service will be at 3:30 PM at Restland Memorial Park.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Donald by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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