



J. Fred Bucy Jr.

July 29, 1928 - May 20, 2021

J. Fred Bucy, Jr. passed away peacefully in his sleep on May 20, 2021 leaving a life of great accomplishment, adventure, the affection of his friends and the deep love of his family.

J. Fred was born in Tahoka Texas in 1928. He always made it clear that the greatest day of his life occurred three years later, when Odetta, his true love and future wife, was born in the nearby town of Grassland, Texas. They first met when she was nine years old and he was twelve helping the soda fountain at the local drugstore. He always gave her an extra scoop of ice cream for her nickel and the romance began. They married 6 years later at Odetta's home, then honeymooned at the Settles Hotel in Big Spring, Texas.

J. Fred earned their money sharecropping at a nearby farm to live on and to pay tuition at Texas Tech University. The only electric power they had come from a wind charger, attached to a large storage battery. Ironic for a man who would become President and CEO of one of the most innovative electronics companies in the world, Texas Instruments.

J. Fred received his B. S. degree in engineering from Texas Tech University in 1951, cementing a rich relationship with the university that would last a lifetime. While at Texas Tech, they had their first born, Fred, III. Soon they would move to Austin for J. Fred to earn his Masters degree in physics, becoming an associate research physicist at the Defense Research Laboratories of the University of Texas. While studying & working in Austin, J. Fred & Odetta welcomed their first daughter into the world, Roxanne. He took great pride in his Master of Science degree in physics from UT, except during football season when he denied he had ever attended any school other than Texas Tech. Go Red Raiders!

J. Fred joined Texas Instruments in Dallas in 1953 and was assigned to Central Research Laboratories, where he oversaw the development of a hybrid analog/digital processor for use in interpreting geophysical data. He spent a significant amount of time applying the

new technology to some of the largest oilfields in the world. After a couple of years, J. Fred was transferred to the Houston office. It was not long after they moved to Houston, that they had their second daughter, Diane. Later, he was assigned the development of the first solid state seismic system, introduced to the market in 1958. He played a key role in applying digital technology to the seismic industry, making oil and gas exploration far more precise. In 1963, TI transferred him back to Dallas for him to become the corporate vice president of Texas Instruments and general manager of the apparatus division, which included the Houston- based Industrial Products and the Dallas- based Government Products, such as radar, infrared sonar, missile, and space systems and instrumentation. In 1967, he became head of his company's Semiconductor-Components Division, including its international manufacturing operations. He eventually became corporate group vice president, with world-wide responsibility for the components group.

He served as director or chairman of the board of a number of subsidiaries of Texas Instruments, including President of Texas Instruments, Japan. J. Fred worked in almost all of the company's major divisions, becoming executive vice president in 1972, chief operating officer in 1975 and president in 1976. He added the title of chief executive officer in 1984. During his time at TI, J. Fred managed, worked on, or witnessed such innovations as the transistor radio, laser guided bombs, the world's first working integrated circuit, the first hand-held calculator, the single chip microprocessor and speech synthesis technology. J. Fred retired from Texas Instruments, after 32 years, in May 1985.

J. Fred, who had to spend a great deal of time in management, still prided himself as an engineer. He authored or co-authored a number of significant patents, including for security alarms described as: A system for detecting intruders in a building, using sets of light emitters and detectors. Interruption of a beam between an emitter and a detector produces a radio signal picked up by a control console. He also obtained a number of other patents including a data processing system in connection with seismic surveying operations.

J. Fred was admitted as a fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, a member of the National Academy of Engineering, and a member of the Defense Science Board of the Department of Defense. As a member of the Defense Science Board he led the Task Force on the Export of US Technology and made appearances before Congress as an advisor on the issue of exporting critical and militarily sensitive technology. J. Fred also served as a Trustee of Southwest Research Institute.

J. Fred took great pride and pleasure in serving Texas Tech University for over 40 years. He was a member of the Board of Regents of Tech from 1973 to 1991 and Chairman from

1980 to 1982 and 1988 to 1990. He and his wife Odetta created The Bucy Graduate Scholarships in Applied Physics; The Bucy Undergraduate Scholarships in Physics and The Bucy Endowed Chair in Physics. Texas Tech has described J. Fred as one of the most distinguished alumni of the Department of Physics and of Texas Tech University. They awarded him an honorary Doctor of Science degree from the University in 1994. J. Fred was also instrumental in establishing the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, a major advancement for regional health care in West Texas.

Out of all his accomplishments, there was nothing more impressive than the way he spent his years after retirement. His plans of consulting work, spending a lot of time at their beach house in Port Aransas, and on their sailboat, were cruelly derailed when the love of his life was diagnosed with throat cancer. Doctors predicted Odetta only had a matter of months to live, but with superhuman nursing skills J. Fred provided Odetta another 9 precious years, to enjoy birthdays and holidays with her children and six grandchildren. Her initial treatments caused Odetta to lose the ability to speak, and J. Fred had lost a significant amount of his hearing perfecting technology on oil rigs on Lake Maracaibo in Venezuela for years. J. Fred often kidded that it may have made for the perfect marriage.

In a strange twist, a man who largely oversaw the invention of the electronic voice chip, was able to obtain a device (essentially a souped up Speak and Spell) that allowed Odetta to quickly type whatever was on her mind, push a button and have the machine speak for her!

On the day before he passed, J. Fred, clearing his thoughts from a long dementia, looked up and said, "Will you be home when I get there?" The next morning the family and caregivers understood what he meant... He was speaking to Odetta, and the answer was "yes".

J. Fred was preceded in death by his wife, Odetta, his son J. Fred Bucy III, his parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. Fred Bucy Sr., and two sisters. He is survived by his daughters Roxanne Coogan and her husband Keith and Diane Gruber and her husband Mike, six grandchildren - Patrick Coogan, Shane Coogan, Michael Gruber, Becky Gruber, Chris Gruber and Josh Bucy, plus six great grandchildren.

A private family service was held at Restland Memorial Park in Dallas on May 25, 2021. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Memory of J. Fred Bucy, Jr. to the Aging Mind Foundation or to The Bucy Graduate Scholarships in Applied Physics or The Bucy Undergraduate Scholarships in Physics at Texas Tech University.

Comments



“ I want to extend my condolences to the entire Bucy family, and especially to J. Fred's daughters, Roxanne and Diane, their husbands, Keith and Mike, and all of the grandchildren. Over the years of working with J. Fred on legal matters (a few years of which were while Odetta was still living), I feel that I got to know every one of you-- and in case there was any doubt in your mind, every one of you were very much loved by J. Fred.

I know his loss is at the same time both a sad occasion and a relief, due to his rather long period of dementia. In any case, he will be missed.

Please accept my condolences and my best wishes to each of you for the future.

John W. Harris, Attorney

John W. Harris - June 11 at 05:42 PM