



Benny Ray Lillard

June 14, 1946 - June 19, 2015

Benny Ray Lillard was born on June 14, 1946 in Huntsville, Texas and died June 19, 2015 after a lengthy and courageous battle with cancer. He passed away in his home of 40 years surrounded by his loved ones, his friends, and his three cherished dogs.

Benny was raised in Boettcher's Mill and spent most of his adult life in Huntsville. He started working alongside his father in the family logging business when he was 12-years-old. As a young man, he was also employed by Frito Lay in Dallas and Brown and Root in Colorado, the only two times he lived outside of Walker County. Benny's primary profession was as a heavy equipment operator/truck driver and put behind the wheel, he could teach himself to run any piece of machinery. He drove for Gerald Kirkland and David Martinez before starting his own wrecker service, and then shifted into the business of moving mobile homes. Additionally, Benny was a volunteer for the Huntsville Fire Department for almost two decades. He responded to many major fires in Huntsville, including Old Main on the SHSU campus, and bravely saved local lives and property alongside his fellow firefighters.

Benny also tirelessly volunteered his time in other ways for the community. As a member of the Elks Lodge he initiated a local Easter egg hunt for the children of Huntsville. He also supervised bingo at the Elks Lodge for over 5 years to raise funds for children's camps. There are many stories to tell of

Benny's generosity; he nurtured friends who were sick, donated blood for the injured, participated in multiple search parties for the missing, raised money for many worthy causes, helped displaced hurricane victims at a local shelter, rescued and protected a herd of animals throughout the years, and welcomed many a wandering soul into his home. Benny loved to talk, was an instant friend to all, and could make anyone feel like the most important person in the room. His smile was ever-present and his gentle spirit was apparent.

Benny's spirit also shined in the love he had for his family. He was born to Edgar Allen Lillard and Ada Laura Walker Lillard. He is survived by two older brothers Edward Lillard and wife Katherine of Spring, Texas and Joe Lillard and wife Shirley of Huntsville, Texas. He was preceded in death by his sister Mary Alice Lillard Johnson. He leaves behind his beloved wife of 42 years Sandra NeSmith Lillard, his daughter Nesi Lillard, and granddaughter Viviana Lillard. Extended family includes his mother-in-law, Johnnie Loving, sister-in-laws Debbie Coleman and Rhonda Coleman Gomez, nephews Allen Ray Lillard, Jonathan Coleman, Alex Gomez, Patrick Gomez, Walter Johnson, and Matt Johnson, niece Jessica Gomez Barrios, and great-nephew Koa Barrios.

Pallbearers are Allen Ray Lillard, Jonathan Coleman, Alex Gomez, Patrick Gomez, David Beacleay, John Hobbs, Jessica Gomez, and Lacy Lansford.

Visitation will take place at Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home on Monday, June 22, 2015 at 5pm followed by services at 6pm.

Benny's family would like to thank his expert and compassionate team of doctors at MD Anderson and the incredible nursing staff at Thee Hospice, particularly Tiffany. A memorial fund has been set up in Benny's honour. Go to <http://www.gofundme.com/xf98zg> for more information or to contribute. Those wishing to leave memorial condolences for the family may do so at www.shmfh.com

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN **22**. 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home - Huntsville
1700 Normal Park Dr.
Huntsville, TX 77340
(936) 291-7300
belinda@shmfmh.com

Service

JUN **22**. 6:00 PM (CT)

Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home - Huntsville
1700 Normal Park Dr.
Huntsville, TX 77340
(936) 291-7300
belinda@shmfmh.com

Tribute Wall



“ *Benny Ray Lillard*

November 15, 2022 at 08:33 PM



“ *I was so sorry to hear of Bennie's passing. Bennie was a good man, always had a smile on his face. Every time I'd run into him We'd talk and end up laughing about something. Condolences to the family.*

Johnny Amick - July 02, 2015 at 10:49 PM



“ *I have known Mr. Benny Lillard my entire life as our neighbor and great friend. One funny story that comes to mind was when he came with his wrecker to rescue me when my car broke down at Sonic. I was just 16 years old and horrified that I was stuck at Sonic where all my 'cool' friends might see me! He calmly hooked up my car, (I hid in the floor board of the wrecker in shame.) He just laughed and said " it will be ok". Benny was always there offering to help anyone in need. He, Sandra and Nesi have been a big part of my life growing up. I am sad that he is no longer here with us. He leaves behind a trail of kindness and good memories for all that knew him. Sending love and prayers for the family of this sweet man. With love, Ruby Wolverton Cowan*



Ruby Cowan - June 22, 2015 at 01:03 PM

TG

“ *Sad to hear of the loss of a very good man. Remembering his smile always. Prayers for the family. Tom and Debbie Grisham*

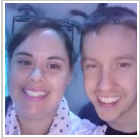
Tom and Debbie Grisham - June 22, 2015 at 09:16 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Benny Ray Lillard.*



June 21, 2015 at 12:40 PM



“ *We're so sorry for the loss of this great man. We will miss our times on the porch with Mr. Benny so much. As always, we are here if you need us, and we know that Mr. Benny's sweet spirit is looking over you and your family now.*



Sunday Miller - June 21, 2015 at 11:45 AM

SR

“ *Sandra and family and Joe and family,
I am so sorry for your loss of such a sweet and wonderful man. I
have known Benny and Joe most of my life. We grew up together at
Boettcher's Mill and I have so many fond memories of those days.
The last time I saw Benny was when my pop, Buddy Colburn,
passed away. May God Bless and watch over you in your time of
loss. My prayers are with you. I may not be able to attend his
funeral, my husband is having three procedures done on Monday at
MDAnderson but my heart and spirit will be there with you.*
Sandra Graves Risinger

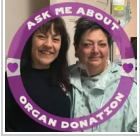
Sandra Graves Risinger - June 21, 2015 at 01:03 AM



“ *Blooming Garden Basket was purchased for the
family of Benny Ray Lillard.*



June 21, 2015 at 12:41 AM



“ To Sandra, Nesi, Vivi, Debbie & Rhonda, I am so very sorry for the loss of such a wonderful man! I have known Benny & Joe most of my adult life and you cannot find two better men that would help a stranger in a heartbeat! I know it is so hard to let someone go but he IS in Heaven and walking those streets of gold no longer in ANY pain!! I am so glad that you have Debbie and Rhonda to be your arms and legs when you felt yours could go no further. I so wish I had been able to help in your transportation needs but my health prevented me from doing so. There were times when you felt you could just go no further and God picked you up & carried you!! I hope you know that I will try to be there for you should you ever need me ANYTIME!! I LOVE YOU all so very much... You are my FAMILY!! God Bless and MUCH LOVE....Jamie ❤️

Jamie Sue Brinegar - June 20, 2015 at 05:18 PM

NG

“ Nelda Claiborne Gray lit a candle in memory of Benny Ray Lillard



Nelda Claiborne Gray - June 20, 2015 at 04:39 PM

GF

“ Our prayers are with the Family. Mr. Benny was a Great Friend and Neighbor. We will miss His Smile, His Wave, and His Personality. It has been nice knowing him for many years. May God be with you in this time of need.

George Gonzalez and Family - June 20, 2015 at 01:54 PM

ML

“ *Benny was definitley one of a kind and truly a sweetheart. You know we love you all very much. So glad for Vivi that she got to be this man's pride and joy. Love and hugs.*

Mike Sandra Lansford - June 20, 2015 at 08:07 AM



“ *Teresa Lawson lit a candle in memory of Benny Ray Lillard*



Teresa Lawson - June 19, 2015 at 10:38 PM

RG

“ *Not, How Did He Die, But How Did He Live?*

*Not, how did he die, but how did he live?
Not, what did he gain, but what did he give?
These are the units to measure the worth
Of a man as a man, regardless of birth.
Not what was his church, nor what was his creed?
But had he befriended those really in need?
Was he ever ready, with word of good cheer,
To bring back a smile, to banish a tear?
Not what did the sketch in the newspaper say,
But how many were sorry when he passed away?*

Anonymous

It was my greatest pleasure and a once in a lifetime blessing to be able to care for and comfort Bennie in his final days. He was the single most influential man in my life and taught me what a husband and father should be. Words cannot express my sorrow at his passing nor the happiness that I feel that he has gone on to a new adventure and now walks another path, free of pain and suffering.

Rhonda Coleman Gomez

Rhonda Gomez - June 19, 2015 at 09:53 PM

BC

“ *Bridgette Neeley Clay lit a candle in memory of Benny Ray Lillard*

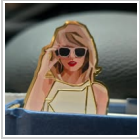


Bridgette Neeley Clay - June 19, 2015 at 09:23 PM

LM

“ I am so sorry this has happened. I am reminded of a vacation that you invited Jennifer to attend. Sandra was so worried because Jennifer didn't eat anything but crackers and peanut butter. Nesi and Jennifer had fun. May you find peace and comfort in the wonderful memories you made as a family.

Leah McNutt - June 19, 2015 at 09:10 PM



“ 10 files added to the album Benny Ray



Nesi Lillard - June 19, 2015 at 08:11 PM

BB

So sorry to hear Nesi. Your family will be in my prayers.

Bonnie Barker - June 19, 2015 at 08:25 PM

LG

“ Sandra and family, we are so sorry to hear about Benny. Our thoughts and prayers will be with you to hopefully help you through this trying time.

Larry & Martha Grisham - June 19, 2015 at 04:59 PM