



Daniel "Dan" Slater

February 13, 1924 - January 18, 2014

The circle of our world reeled around the edges on Sunday January 12, 2014 when Dan Slater left this world to see the other side. For some, life can be a struggle. Dan looked at life and embraced, with gusto, the God-given opportunities for living life as it was intended. As our world moves forward, Dan's legacy continues as a cherished memory, burnished and glorified by his life companion Norma, a glowing number of great-grandchildren, grandchildren, and four delightful offspring as his immediate family. By naming selected highlights of a long, full life, it is inevitable that some deeds and activities will be overlooked. Dan's total package of accomplishments and activities provided building blocks for making a difference during a long and productive life. A review of his life would not be complete without recognizing just a few activities. These nostalgic memories and recollections go out of their way to praise the deeds while overlooking details. Many of these remain in the family. So very many of Dan's deeds were a reaching out to others and bringing a bit of joy to them. Rather than platitudes and pious proclamations, Dan wanted to make a positive contribution in all circumstances. Some actions became public due to the inclusion of people and personalities outside family environs. The scope of his many activities may never become public. He seldom told the world about all of them. Many are worth remembering with a smile. Many of these related incidents and activities are centered on the First Presbyterian Church where Dan occupied a choice choir position. Even if you were there, you may not be aware of his many talents. This story is

related without reference to personalities. Long after the fact and under duress, Dan was willing to show examples of his pencil sketches. From a viewpoint in the choir loft, he sketched members of the congregation during sermons. There is a collection of this art although most are unsigned and cannot be fully documented. His poetry delighted the church on select occasions. Birthdays may or may not be special occasions. This is a factor of age or other conditions of existence. For some, the crowning event of a birthday was a serenade offered by Dan. This was not the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Musical instruments included, but are not limited to turkey basters, kazoos, and ukuleles. A vocal rendition of "Happy Birthday" does wonders as a wake-up call before a late breakfast. Early on, he sold magazine subscriptions; even managing a small troop of kids doing the same thing. These efforts enabled him to understand how much could be accomplished by providing leadership, inspiration, and encouragement. In World War II, Dan overcame a fear of heights and earned status as a young pilot of a B-24 Liberator bomber during World War II (35 missions). One wartime snapshot presents a picture of Dan the slight skinny kid surrounded by crew members several years his senior. Leadership was not measured by age. This love of flying never died. After a cross-country flight to California, he once flew under the Golden Gate Bridge. With the overwhelming support of Norma, his future and only wife, they flew a Piper Cub over the countryside in Iowa to locate desirable picnic sites. After college (Iowa State) and a degree in architecture, wife Norma and Dan followed their dreams and ambitions with an employment stint in the Panama Canal Zone. This later led, with young children, to a desire to return stateside. Some active recruiting led them to wend their way to Navasota in Texas. Life was good. Employment opportunities were reasonable and living in Texas was considered pleasant. Major undercurrents and a difficult political environment in Navasota caused the family to move to Huntsville. With all candor, Dan's life and that of his family became a strong instrument of change in Huntsville. Public adulation and acknowledgement of his many acts was not documented even though these were many positive

steps for progress. Quietly, with little public fanfare, Dan served as choir director at First Presbyterian Church for several years. His avocation included barber shop quartets, English madrigals, a community singing group, and the men's choir. In addition, he spent many hours in other churches and denominations providing guidance and leadership for beginning or growing music programs. In addition to family and a warm family life at home, Dan was quite the accomplished hobbyist. His model train layout (N gauge) is more than 150 feet long. A radio-controlled sailboat explored Spring Lake. These activities exhibit proof positive of a man interested in expanding the perimeters of life on this earth. It is too late to ask for permission but Dan would approve the following. This loving memory ends with a famous family quote from Norma: "And that is the way it is." Dan (Daniel James Slater) was 89 and was born in Omaha, Nebraska, on February 13, 1924, to Dwight and May Slater. His parents preceded him in death, along with his wife, Norma Jean Slater, and his grandson, Drew Slater. Dan is survived by his sisters, Marjorie Blume, Barbara Maus, and Silvia Ranney, and his children, Jeff Slater and wife Amy, Holly Slater Hall, Danny Slater and wife Sue, and Andy Slater. He is also survived by grandchildren Lee Slater and wife Kim, Soren Hall and wife Devin, Cody Slater and wife Tanya, and great grandchildren Jackson Slater and Casey Littleton. Visitation with Dan's family will be at the Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home on Friday, January 17, from 5 to 7 PM. His funeral will be held at the First Presbyterian Church at 2:00 on Saturday, January 18. Those wishing to leave memorial condolences for the family may do so at www.shmfh.com.

Tribute Wall



“ Daniel "Dan" Slater

November 15, 2022 at 08:33 PM



“ "Happy Birthday to You," "Happy Birthday to You," "Happy Birthday to Dan," "Happy Birthday to You!" "Happy 90th Birthday, Dan!" If you could have only seen all the hands that went up at your memorial service when we were asked who had been a recipient of your birthday phone calls. The entire church raised their hands!! They also spoke of the many ways you touched them through your faith, your jokes, and positive outlook on life. I'm sure God has already said to you as he checked your name off on the book of life and welcomed you into heaven, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" Until we meet again...may God continue to bless you and Norma and your family. With love from Fred, Jody, and Freddy Otto

Jody Otto - February 13, 2014 at 11:50 AM

LH

“ I guess my family arrived in Huntsville the same time as did the Slaters. Dan and I sang together in the First Methodist Church choir, prior to his departure to lead the Presbyterian church choir. We played a lot of table tennis, some tennis, sang duets, and exchanged lousy jokes. He taught me to play the saw, sort of. Dan did me the favor of hiring me as a draftsman for a few high school and college years, and we maintained contact for all these intervening decades. I was a convert to the Slater Method of trading futures, though my wins were on paper and my losses were with paper money. During the recent few years we were in regular email contact, and I could always count on something interesting and/or funny from Dan.

I say all this in recollection, reminding myself how lucky I have been to have this 50+ year history with such a remarkable person. There are few people on this planet like Dan Slater, or maybe there aren't any. Our world is much diminished by his passing.

Larry Hampton - February 03, 2014 at 10:34 PM

HJ

“ Dear Slater children. I heard of your dad's passing this morning - I'm so sorry - I will miss his humor and upbeat outlook on life. I worked for your dad as a draftsman during my summers home from college, starting in 1962. He introduced me to many things, including KODA radio, an FM station out of Houston that was always playing in his office, and the 1 second nap. That was when he would relax in his chair holding a spoon in his hand and would doze off and the spoon would fall from his hand and awaken him. He claimed the intervening second or so was all he needed to be refreshed. Over the years I made many stops at his office on Lake Road when I was in town. He always had a fresh joke for me and then needed to hear about my career and family. I will miss those visits and my mentor and friend.

Sincerely,
Harry & Judy Jones
College Station

Harry Jones - January 26, 2014 at 11:37 PM

TW

“ *"Hoorah for the Pirate King! For it is, it is, a glorious thing to be a Pirate King!" Community theater will never be that good again. Dan Slater will be missed by many.*

Teresa Wagamon - January 18, 2014 at 11:05 PM

SM

“ *My prayers are for peace and comfort as you say goodbye to your loved one. Sweet memories will sustain you until you meet again.*

Sandy Murphy - January 18, 2014 at 10:41 AM

TF

“ Hello Dan

You were courageous in life and generous with your love, opinion, and humor! You helped Lisa and I design our home. You astounded me with playing music with a turkey baster, and again with the melodius saw.

One day I had lunch with Dan and Norma, then drove towards home. Dan composed a poem after I rolled Lisa's red truck with a load of wood behind:

*There once was an old man named Fossum
who rolled over and over like a possum
He came out of the Ford
Giving thanks to the Lord
And said that ride was something awesome.*

Having known Dan Slater has been a great gift, and I will treasure his memory.

Tore Fossum - January 18, 2014 at 10:24 AM

FO

“ To Jeff, Holly, Danny, Andy, and families,
We are so sorry for your loss, but know that your dad is in heaven with your mom and other family and friends who have preceded him. We had the pleasure of getting to know your dad as he designed the plans for our house. We always looked forward to our sessions with him. He was so knowledgeable about all kinds of things and a true artist. We enjoyed watching him draw many of our ideas free-hand so that we could get a better picture of what they would look like in 2D. He was "old school" but was able to adapt to the computer age and was always open to learning new things. Dan made many contributions to the development of Huntsville through his work as an architect, i.e. Margarita's, University Heights Baptist Church, the Elkins Lake entrance sign, and many other homes, churches and commercial buildings throughout the area. We, too, enjoyed the pleasure of his jokes, stories, and vocal and instrumental birthday wishes. He played the ukulele for our birthday wishes! I would purposely let the answering machine record his song so that I could hear it again later and then call Dan right back! We are grateful to have had the opportunity to get to know him. He was truly a man of faith who loved his family and the arts. We will miss him, too, and look forward to seeing him again when God calls each of us home in His time.
Take Care and God Bless,
Love,
Fred, Jody, and Freddy Otto

Fred, Jody, and Freddy Otto - January 17, 2014 at 01:54 PM

DW

“ *Mr. Slater was an intelligent gentle kind man who tolerated Jeff's rowdy uncivilized friends with patience and good humor. My best memory was him accompanying Jeff, Rodney Nance and I to Police Chief Todd's office the day after the 1967 Halloween egg throwing arrest. His help in our Boy Scout Troop 99 demonstrated his resourcefulness and youthful nature. Jeff and his family will be in our thoughts and prayers.*

Darrel Wells - January 17, 2014 at 10:01 AM

BS

“ *Dan was such a happy guy, we felt his joy. He was uniquely talented and loved to share his music, stories and jokes. Thank you Lord for giving us Dan Slater!*

Bob and Dorothy Swinney - January 15, 2014 at 07:48 PM

WD

“ *We are so sorry for your loss! Dan had such a great attitude towards life always filled with his own special brand of humor. We will especially miss his jokes and kidding around with the kids at church and also his unique musical birthday phone calls to us. My family will truly miss Dan! Our prayers are with you. Sincerely yours... Will, Kathy, Gwynn, and Luke Durham*

Will, Kathy, Gwynn, and Luke Durham - January 15, 2014 at 10:53 AM

JJ

“ *Dan was a good friend. We shared many laughs and tears this last year, and became closer through our losses. The world was a better place because of Dan -- playing happy birthday on the phone on his saw, or turkey baster, or whatever. Such an intelligent man who loved puns and had a quick wit -- and like a child (of God). We'll miss him . . . and we will always remember him!*

Janet Jack - January 14, 2014 at 11:53 PM

JF

“ Uncle Danny was a remarkable man; I have so many wonderful childhood memories of him, but remember always his beautiful voice, uplifting spirit, his laughter and his capacity for telling a great (often Aggie) joke. Smart, funny, loving, sharing, kind, inquisitive, creative, dedicated to his family, especially Norma Jean. What a splendid man, father, brother, and uncle. He was a treasure, and will surely be missed.
Jackie (Barb's daughter)

Jackie Maus Feldman - January 14, 2014 at 07:03 PM

GG

“ What a special, special man. I recall fondly the times we sang together. Dan, God bless you and keep you.

Greg and Dani Gathright - January 14, 2014 at 06:13 PM

LP

“ Dan was such a special man. He was always positive and uplifting. Many of us will not forget our special birthday songs we received from Dan. His smile, laugh, and songs will be missed here on earth, but we will all get to see him & Norma again. Until then, he will entertain everyone in Heaven! Rest in Peace Dan!

Lori Proctor - January 14, 2014 at 10:44 AM

MF

“ We are sorry for your loss. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

Mellicent Sikes Wiley. & Family - January 13, 2014 at 06:24 PM

RC

“ My sincere condolences to one who lighted the lives of others.

Robert Conner - January 13, 2014 at 05:04 PM

LH

“ We are going to miss your Dad's wonderful laugh and smile. Please take care and know that yall are in our prayers.

Love,
Tom and Lynda Henry

Lynda Henry - January 13, 2014 at 01:01 PM

SM

“ I am saddend to hear of Uncle Danny's passing. Mom called me yesterday. He was always so wonderful to call and sign to me on my birhtday. This last July when he called we had a long wonderful conversation about his life and things he did with Mom and his other sisters. He mentioned he was writing down some things he remembered about his life...I hope he got this done and you can enjoy that. Much love to you all, you are in our thoughts and prayers. Sally

Sally Maus - January 13, 2014 at 11:53 AM

JG

“ We are so sorry to hear of your Dad's passing. He was such a funny guy, always keeping everyone laughing. I still remember him fondly from the days of working with Danny on his cars at the house.

We will be thinking of your family and keeping you in our prayers during this difficult period.

Love, Janet and Lloyd George

Janet & Lloyd George - January 13, 2014 at 09:51 AM

PA

“ *Heaven got another angel today. Dan has gone to join his love and several friends that went before him. I will not forget my last birthday thanks to your beautiful song. Dan and Norma stood up with me the day I joined Presbyterian Church.
I will never forget them. Will miss you Dan!*

Paula Agan - January 12, 2014 at 03:58 PM