



Dr. Jack Smith Staggs

September 16, 1925 - December 17, 2017

Jack Smith Staggs was born in Malvern, Arkansas on September 16, 1925 and died December 17, 2017 in Huntsville, Texas.

He is survived by sister Mary Guyer of Weirsdale, Florida; nieces Lindel Fletcher and Joan Reed; nephews Douglas Johnson and Harry Staggs. He was preceded in death by his parents Nettie and Emory Staggs; his wife of 64 years, Kathleen; sisters Vera Gross and Ima Miller; brothers Madison, James, Raymond, and Nathaniel; nephews Frank Guyer and Bobby Jack Gross.

Jack graduated from Malvern High School as valedictorian of his class, completed the Navy

V – 12 Program at the University Oklahoma and Officer Training School at Harvard University prior to serving as Supply Disbursing Officer at the Roi-Namur Air Base in the Marshall Islands in World War II.

He received his B.S. Degree from Central Arkansas University, his M. A. Degree from Peabody College of Vanderbilt University and his Ed.D. Degree from the University of Houston. For more than fifty years Dr. Staggs was a professional educator serving as teacher, counselor or administrator at both junior college and university levels. The assignment he enjoyed most was teacher; to him nothing was more rewarding than interacting with a room filled with students. Regardless of his assignment, he always managed to teach

one or more classes.

Jack and Kathleen moved to Texas in 1949 when the position of school counselor received first legal recognition with the signing of the Gilmer-Aikin Bill that year. Jack had been trained as a counselor at Peabody College of Vanderbilt University. He was invited to come to Texas and served as school counselor in various schools in South Texas.

While employed by the Corpus Christi Independent School District he was asked to develop a counseling program for Del Mar College which he directed for three and a half years. Following an address to the Texas Personnel and Guidance Association in San Antonio in October, 1959 Dr. Elliot Bowers invited him to visit Sam Houston State Teachers College which he did and joined the faculty in January, 1960.

At Sam Houston he served as Director of the Department of Education and Psychology, Coordinator of Graduate Programs in Education and/or Professor for 33 years. During these years he also coordinated seminars for gifted students from area high schools, secured a Phi Delta Kappa Chapter for graduate students, and served on many committees of the University. He established endowed awards to honor the doctoral students submitting the best dissertation in Educational Leadership and in Counseling each calendar year. The Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling dedicated the Jack S. Staggs Counseling clinic in his honor in 2004.

Dr. Staggs served as President of Region VI School Board Association, President of the Board of Trustees of Huntsville Independent School District, served on the Huntsville Arts Commission, the Cultural Activities Board, the Huntsville Education Foundation Board, and various committees for the First United Methodist Church.

In Rotary he served as President of the Huntsville Rotary Club, as Governor of Rotary District 5910, as a delegate to the Council on Legislation in New Delhi, India, led a Group Study Exchange Team to England, a Youth Exchange Group to Germany, and attended eleven International meetings. He received the Service Above Self Award from Rotary International in 1998, the first awarded to a Rotarian in District 5910.

Dr. Staggs was a very private person who avoided publicity of all kinds whenever possible. He was interested in the biological and physical aspects of nature; he enjoyed reading and visited most countries of the world. He spent part of most evenings reading and listening to classical music. He enjoyed helping other both young and old; he looked for the best in others and gave the best he had. Some called him Mr. Education, others called him Mr. Rotary, and some of the children in our church called him Mr. Bowtie. In honor of this please wear your favorite bowtie to his memorial service.

Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

A Memorial Service is scheduled for Thursday, January 4, 2018 at 2 pm at First United Methodist Church with the Reverend Daniel Irving officiating.

His ashes will be buried in Greenlawn Cemetery in Spartanburg, South Carolina.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the First United Methodist Church at 1016 Sam Houston Avenue, Huntsville, Texas 77320 and the Huntsville Education Foundation at 441 FM 2821 East Huntsville, Texas 77320 c/o Shannon Duncan.

Full obituary may be viewed and memorial condolences made to the family at

www.shmfh.com.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 4. 2:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church of Huntsville
1016 North Sam Houston Ave
Huntsville, TX

Tribute Wall



“ *Dr. Jack Smith Staggs*

November 15, 2022 at 08:33 PM



“ *Dr. Jack Staggs was one of the kindest people I have ever known. A great educator, he was truly dedicated to the students. I feel that my life was enriched by knowing Dr. Staggs. Heaven has gained another Angel.*

Dorothy Wooten

Dorothy Wooten - January 02, 2018 at 12:52 PM



“ *Terri Hoke sent a virtual gift in memory of Dr. Jack Smith Staggs*



Terri Hoke - December 31, 2017 at 04:44 AM



“ *Dr Staggs was my favorite professor at Sam and a good friend of my fathers. He was a wonderful man and made such a huge impact on this world.*

Marianne Mote - December 30, 2017 at 07:13 PM

LD

“ Lillian Douglas lit a candle in memory of Dr. Jack Smith Staggs



lillian douglas - December 30, 2017 at 06:04 PM

LD

As sister to Kathleen, Jack's wife, my memories of Jack cover many years. Aside from his professional successes, Jack was a very family oriented person. His large, extended family, as mine, were part and parcel of the man throughout his life. We were all recipients of his caring.

Lillian Douglas - December 30, 2017 at 06:14 PM

EP

“ I spent 6 years on the Huntsville ISD board of Trustees (1980 - 1986) with Jack. Jack had a keen sense of humor. It was always a pleasure to be around Jack. I remember the first trip he and Kathleen took to Australia. The stories were interesting. The second trip was much more eventful.

Eugene M. Poldrack

Eugene M. Poldrack - December 26, 2017 at 04:15 PM

ML

“ Marjolein Lemmon lit a candle in memory of Dr. Jack Smith Staggs



Marjolein Lemmon - December 21, 2017 at 02:31 PM

MW

“ *Mellicent Sikes Wiley lit a candle in memory of Dr. Jack Smith Staggs*



Mellicent Sikes Wiley - December 18, 2017 at 01:35 PM

LD

As sister to Kathleen, Jack's wife, my memories of Jack are throughout many years. Jack was, aside from his professional credentials, a very family oriented person and a joy to be with.

lillian douglas - December 30, 2017 at 06:00 PM

JS

I had a class under Dr. Staggs at Sam Houston in the '60-'61 time frame. I was the first college graduate in my family and came from very modest means. We had to take an I.Q. test in Dr. Staggs class and then he would discuss it with us privately. He told me that I was capable of becoming anything that i wanted to be according to my test. I taught school six years and then went to dental school.. During the trying times of dental school, I would recall what he had told me as far as my mental ability was concerned. It was most helpful to me and i became a dentist and practiced dentistry for thirty years. i have always given him credit for the encouaging words that changed my life. Thanks Dr. Staggs and may you rest in peace.

John Sturrock D.D.S.

John Sturrock - December 31, 2017 at 02:48 PM

SS

As a post-graduate student at SHSU, I took an educational leadership class from Dr. Staggs. He was funny, informative and gave me confidence to succeed. Thank you, Dr. Staggs.

Sharon Siebern - January 02, 2018 at 11:23 AM

BS

I took Dr. Staggs for several classes and was a man of many hats. I adored his bow ties, which he proudly wore and had s smile that was very contagious. His expectations were high for his students, but he was always there to encourage you to achieve them. Thanks, Dr. Staggs!

Bernice Spitzenberger, 1/2/2018

Bernice Spitzenberger - January 02, 2018 at 07:21 PM