



## Robert Lee Bruner

June 5, 1940 - February 20, 2021

In the early morning hours of Saturday, February 20, 2021, as the winter snow began to melt away and the sun shone brightly for the first time in days, Robert Lee Bruner left this earth and was face to face with his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He died peacefully at his home in Huntsville, Texas, in the company of his loving and devoted wife of 56 years, Toni. Robert and his family were blessed by and will remain forever grateful for the numerous calls and visits from friends in the weeks preceding and in the days following his death. The outpouring of love from near and far continues to be a testament to the life of a man who listened more than he spoke, gave more than he took, always cared, and never complained.

Following high school graduation from Jeff Davis High School in Houston, Robert graduated from Sam Houston State University in 1962. After a short stint in the United States Army, he began his career in agriculture as a field representative with Swift and Company, thus launching his life-long passion for the study of proper grass care and its benefits to the beef industry. In 1964, Robert and Toni purchased their first herd of commercial cattle, establishing his career in an industry to which he would become fully dedicated and tirelessly committed. A proud multi-generation Texan, Robert spent the remainder of his life ranching on land given to his family for service at the Battle of San Jacinto. To him, his land was never “the ranch,” but always just “the farm.”

Throughout his life and until his death, Robert served the agriculture and

cattle industry in various leadership roles with numerous organizations. He was a strong promoter of soil fertility, and until his death maintained active participation in water conservation and planning as an appointed member of the coordinating body for Regional Group H of the Texas Water Development Board. As a steadfast advocate for education, Robert enjoyed working with a variety of entities, including his alma mater, Sam Houston State University, where he was awarded the Outstanding Agriculture Supporter Award and continued to serve on the board of the Sam Houston Foundation until his death. In addition, he served until present day as Chairman of the Walker County Pasture and Forage Committee and hosted numerous demonstrations and field days at “the farm.” While serving as director of the Texas Angus Association during the late '90's, Robert was instrumental in the formation of an All-Breed Bull Test and Sale. The test, under the name Beef Development Research Center of Texas, was the first in the US to research feed efficiency in cattle through an innovative program developed by Canadian Grow Safe Systems. The system continues to be used throughout the US today. For his efforts while president of the Beef Development Center, Robert was awarded the 2008 “Vision Award,” presented by the National Cattleman's Foundation of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, in recognition for innovation in the industry. In 2014, he was inducted into the Texas Hall of Fame by the Texas Angus Association.

Never one for talking about himself, much less drawing attention to his own achievements, Robert would most likely at this point, grunt, mumble something under his breath and leave the room. Many of the accomplishments and awards he graciously received for his efforts, his grandchildren and even his children may not know about. They will be written here as part of Robert's legacy to them - the example of a job well done, of working tirelessly at everything one endeavors to do, and of the joy found in doing what you love. He gave his time and expertise not only because he loved the work but because he truly cared about the people impacted by it. Some of the organizations he considered near and dear to his heart include,

but are not limited to: Build East Texas (Bill Clement Award for Outstanding Achievement); Texas Forage and Grassland Council (Excellent Producer Award); Region IV Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Texas (Conservation Rancher of 2014); Texas Agriculture Extension Service (1998 Man of the Year in Texas); and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo (Superintendent of the Junior Commercial Steer Show). He also held various executive positions within the Independent Cattlemen's Association and the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, served as a voting delegate for the American Angus Association, and was appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture to the Cattlemen's Beef Board. He served a six year term on the Texas Beef Council.

Locally, Robert enjoyed spending most of his adult life serving the people and organizations of Huntsville and Walker County. Although he preferred those tasks in which he was not required to wear a suit, he endured nevertheless. Until the time of his death, he served on the Advisory Board of Creekside Retirement Community. He was Chairman of the Josey Foundation, supporting the health of Walker County and served as Vice Chairman of the Trinity Improvement Association. He was a board member of Huntsville Memorial Hospital, First National Bank of Huntsville, and Town Creek Retirement Community. Robert was also a founding lifetime member of the Walker County Fair Association, the Walker County Timber Growers Association, and a two-term director of the Huntsville-Walker County Chamber of Commerce. Robert believed in helping others and worked to leave his beloved community a better place for the friends and neighbors he cherished. No doubt that today, he has heard the words, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'

Robert is preceded in death by his loving parents, Britt and Kathryn Bruner. In addition to his wife Toni, he is survived by children Kim Rinker and husband Robert, of Dallas and son Jim Bruner and wife Maridee, of Boerne. His grandchildren include Haley Rinker Burns and husband Ryan; Sadie Rinker;

and Sara Kate and Gray Bruner. He is remembered by Jim and Kim as being a caring and faithful dad who was unwaveringly honest and fiercely loyal to his family. Admiringly known by his children for being “tight” with his pocketbook, “Dad” taught them the values of hard work and generosity. His grandchildren will always remember their “Big Daddy” as patient, kind and caring - their “favorite cowboy.” He was never too busy to go fishing or shoot skeet and was always pleased to have a passenger ride around and check the cows and maybe even open a few gates for him. When they spoke, they knew he was listening, and they knew he cared. Big Daddy never minded risking his own life to teach each of his grandchildren to drive a Kubota as soon as they were potty-trained. They never made a mistake that could not be corrected, and he always gave them a second chance to right a wrong. Robert is also survived by his nephew Bart LeMay; cousins Ann Marie Vick and Anna Louise Bruner; and his brother-in-law Morris Faulk.

The family would like to thank the wonderful caregiving ladies who lovingly helped care for Robert in the final weeks of his life. Thank you, Pat Oliphant, Janice Waldrup, Debra Glaze, and Terry Carter. Also, a special thanks to Johnny Hightower and Larry Graves, who kept the farm running and the cows taken care of during the ice and snow storm.

Funeral services will be held on Saturday, February 27, 2021, at Fellowship of Huntsville Church at 3895 State Highway 30. The family will receive friends from 9 until 10:00 A.M., with services officiated by C.F. Hazelwood beginning at 10:00 A.M. The service will be live-streamed at [www.fohc.org](http://www.fohc.org). Interment will follow at Farris Cemetery on FM 1791.

In lieu of flowers, Robert would have appreciated support for (1) The Robert L. And Toni C. Bruner Scholarship at Sam Houston State University, P.O. Box 2537, Huntsville, TX, 77341; (2) the Pregnancy Care Center of Huntsville, P.O. Box 7125, Huntsville, TX, 77340; or (3) the Fellowship of Huntsville Building Fund, 3895 P.O. Box 1200, Huntsville, TX 77340. In addition, the family would like to request you honor Robert’s life by giving of your time to a non-profit organization of your choice.

Memorial condolences to the family may be made at [www.shmfh.com](http://www.shmfh.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Farris Cemetery

FM 1791  
Huntsville, TX 77340

# Previous Events

## Visitation

FEB 27. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

Fellowship of Huntsville Church  
3895 Highway 30 West  
Huntsville, TX

## Funeral Service

FEB 27. 10:00 AM (CT)

Fellowship of Huntsville Church  
3895 Highway 30 West  
Huntsville, TX

# Tribute Wall



“ *Robert Lee Bruner*

November 15, 2022 at 08:33 PM



“ *Peggy Kroesche lit a candle in memory of Robert Lee Bruner*



**peggy kroesche** - February 27, 2021 at 08:23 PM



“ *my memories of Robert go way back to elementary, jr. high, and Davis high schools in Houston. many fun times, even as a youngster he was sweet and kind and totally handsome. love to his family.*

**willie bunting** - February 27, 2021 at 07:01 PM



“ *Charlotte Efird lit a candle in memory of Robert Lee Bruner*



**Charlotte Efird** - February 26, 2021 at 11:47 PM

LG

“ Toni,  
*I am so sad to hear about Robert's passing. Please know that Don and I have you and the kids in our prayers.*  
Liz Gray

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**Liz Gray** - February 26, 2021 at 09:05 PM

IT

“ *Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas purchased the Sacred Duty Spray for the family of Robert Lee Bruner.*



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**Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas** - February 25, 2021 at 04:47 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Robert Lee Bruner.*



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February 25, 2021 at 12:46 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Robert Lee Bruner.*



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February 25, 2021 at 12:32 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of Robert Lee Bruner.



February 25, 2021 at 11:43 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of Robert Lee Bruner.



February 25, 2021 at 11:40 AM



“ *Country Basket Blooms* was purchased for the family of Robert Lee Bruner.



February 24, 2021 at 10:30 PM



“ *Our Prayers go Up for the Bruner Family. Mike thought a lot of Robert. Mike always enjoyed visiting with Robert he always learned something from him. Robert leaves a great void in this community, he will be missed... Praying for Healing and comfort.*

**Mike and Margo Chandler** - February 24, 2021 at 10:01 PM



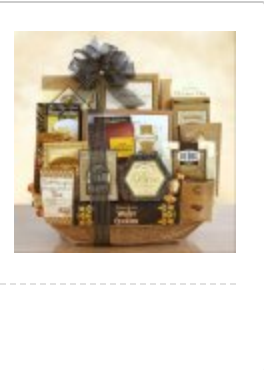
“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Robert Lee Bruner.*



February 24, 2021 at 08:26 PM



“ *With Our Deepest Sympathy Gift Basket was purchased for the family of Robert Lee Bruner.*



February 24, 2021 at 09:20 AM



“ *I will always remember Robert for his friendliness, tireless energy and strong values. If anyone ever wonders what a real Texan looks like, look to Robert. Connie and I send our thoughts to Toni and the family.*

**Rich Heiland** - February 24, 2021 at 07:53 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Robert Lee Bruner.*



February 23, 2021 at 09:39 PM



“ *Lily and Rose Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Robert Lee Bruner.*



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February 23, 2021 at 05:25 PM



“ *Our family is so thankful for the friendship of Robert Bruner that came about, as Dave would always marvel, "all because of the Angus cow!" Robert's innovative and dependable leadership has made a difference, and leaves a legacy of improvement and education for agriculture. Bless you, dear Toni!*

*Julie McMahon French and the McMahon family, Belle Point Ranch, Lavaca, Arkansas*

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**Julie McMahon French** - February 23, 2021 at 11:30 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Robert Lee Bruner.*



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February 23, 2021 at 11:18 AM



“ *My prayers are with the family during this difficult time. I am so very sorry for your loss.*

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**Jeannine Jacoby** - February 23, 2021 at 09:04 AM

EA

“ Toni and family your are in our thoughts and prayers. One of our old ranchers have made it through the final gate. We will miss the visits and that smile and his stories of the ranch or just ever day living . He was very special friend and will be sorely missed.



Edd & Terry Artherholt - February 22, 2021 at 10:47 PM

BL

“ I am deeply saddened by Robert's passing and so sorry for your loss, Toni. He was a great friend to me and so many others. He had such a knack for teaching others and sharing his love of agriculture. I so appreciated his wisdom and outstanding servant leadership.

Bobby Lane - February 22, 2021 at 10:29 PM

KA

“ Mr. Bruner was a friend to me and I will always cherish the friendship we had. What a great man, so sorry for your loss Toni

Kerri Avritt - February 22, 2021 at 08:35 PM

DH

“ Dianne Roberts Harmon lit a candle in memory of Robert Lee Bruner



Dianne Roberts Harmon - February 22, 2021 at 03:55 PM

JC

“ Robert was a lifelong friend and will be missed. Our condolences to the family.

*Jerry, Amanda, and Curt Christian*



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**Jerry Christian** - February 22, 2021 at 11:32 AM

KF

“ Robert was a blessing to the family...even though I was only in the family a few short years...and all who knew you. We are sorry for your loss Toni as you are wrapped in His comforting arms.

*Love Max & Kathy*

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**Kathy & Max Farris** - February 22, 2021 at 08:28 AM

DN

“ Mr. Bruner was a genuinely nice man. I always enjoyed our conversations at church and hearing what his "grade" was for the day. Prayers for Toni and his family. He will be missed.

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**DeeAnn and Patrick Novakosky** - February 22, 2021 at 08:09 AM

LG

“ Mr. Bruner was a great man and friend. Our condolences to Toni and family during this time.



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**Larry, Wendy & Heath Graves** - February 21, 2021 at 09:12 PM

TH

“ Thomas & Jennie Hayman lit a candle in memory of Robert Lee Bruner



Thomas & Jennie Hayman - February 21, 2021 at 08:42 PM

MH

“ M. Hyvl sent a virtual gift in memory of Robert Lee Bruner



M. Hyvl - February 21, 2021 at 07:35 PM

CN

“ Clay Newcomb & Frances Newcomb lit a candle in memory of Robert Lee Bruner



Clay Newcomb & Frances Newcomb - February 21, 2021 at 06:25 PM

DP

What a wonderful man he was. Thoughts and prayers sent to his family.

Debra Perkins - February 21, 2021 at 09:01 PM

TB

*We were honored to share pew space with the Bruners at FOHC for a number of years. I always enjoyed visiting with them. Prayers for the entire family.*

*Terry & Michelle Blaylock*

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**Terry & Michelle Blaylock** - February 22, 2021 at 09:15 AM

DN

*Toni and Family, I am so sorry for your loss. I pray that you feel the Heavenly Father's arms wrapped around you as you go through this time of grief. My heartfelt condolences to you and your family. Dorothy (Johnson) Nichols*

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**Dorothy Reader Nichols** - February 23, 2021 at 12:23 AM

DW

*Mr. Bruner was a very kind, helpful and intelligent cattleman who shared his knowledge with me many times. About 20 years ago he sold me the best Angus bull I've ever had and that bull just died right after Christmas, having produced hundreds of great calves. Our prayers are with his family. Darrel Wells*

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**Darrel Wells** - February 23, 2021 at 09:51 AM

LD

*Toni and Family , We were so sorry to hear of your loss. Robert was a Great Man to all of us who knew him . He did a lot for others. God Bless you all as I know he did Robert. ---Carole and Leroy Delk .*

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**Leroy Delk** - February 23, 2021 at 08:59 PM

AH

*Robert's passing creates a major loss within the Sam Houston Agriculture Alumni and the agricultural community in general. Our condolences go out to Toni and their family.*

*Allen and Lynn Hall*

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**Allen Hall** - February 25, 2021 at 12:17 PM

DB

*Robert was always a gentle and kind man. We always enjoyed seeing you both. Prayers for peace in your heart. Cheryl and Don Bumpass*

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**Don Bumpass** - March 08, 2021 at 06:24 PM