



James "Jim" Benton Huff, Sr.

August 4, 1932 - May 13, 2013

James "Jim" Benton Huff, Sr., (80), beloved brother, husband, father, grandfather and friend died Monday, May 13, 2013 after an extended illness at South Central Regional Medical Center in Laurel, MS. He was preceded in death by his parents, Julius Lycurgus Huff and Eva Hilbun Huff; brothers: Andrew Jackson Huff, Leakesville, J. L. Huff, Soso, and sister Helen Huff Myrick of Laurel, Mississippi.

He is survived by his devoted, beloved wife of 55 years, Marilyn Graves Huff. They were married at Hebron Baptist Church on September 1, 1957. His children and their spouses, Drs. Melanie and Tim Hubbard, and Jim and Samantha Huff, lovingly remember James. He is survived by six grandchildren whom he loved dearly: Meredith Hubbard, Lee (Tabitha) Hubbard, Ben Huff, Miles Huff, Matthew Huff, and Mia Grace Huff, all of the Hebron community. Survivors also include his sisters: Eloise Huff Stringer, Canton, MS, Maxine Huff Reddoch, Baton Rouge, LA, brother-in-law G. W. Myrick, Laurel, MS, and sister-in-law Betty Graves Huff, Soso, MS, and a host of nieces and nephews. James Huff was born August 4, 1932 in Laurel, MS. He graduated from Jones County Agricultural High School in 1950 and earned an Associate of Arts degree from Jones County Junior College (JCJC) in 1952. While at Jones, he was active in student affairs and was elected Class Reporter in his sophomore class. He was also elected Homecoming King. In 1954, Huff earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Mississippi State University. Huff was an avid hunter and loved to fish. He spent his personal life and

professional career dedicated to the preservation of natural resources, and worked in many facets of agriculture. Personally, James Huff loved the outdoors and his passion was farming.

A distinguished civic leader, James Huff dedicated his life to building and promoting civic organizations and was committed to community and nationwide service. He was an active member, deacon, and Sunday school teacher at Hebron Baptist Church for approximately 55 years until his death. He was passionate about the love he held for his country; he served in the Infantry of the U.S. Army and was stationed for service in Salzburg, Austria. Among his many city/state/county affiliations, he served in the following positions: former President of the Laurel Lions Club, former Chairmen of the United Way of the Pine Belt, board member of the Jones County Economic Development Authority, board member of the Laurel Farm Bureau, former Chairman of the Pat Harrison Waterway, former Chairman of the State of Mississippi Manufacturing Association, member of Jones County Forestry and the Mississippi Forestry Association. Huff was presented an award for his tree farm by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

He was also on the board of the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, Mississippi Cattleman's Association, JCJC Board of Trustees, Jones County Association for Excellence in Education, Co-Founder and active member Jones Co. Junior Livestock Assn. He and his wife Marilyn were named JCJC Alumni of the Year in October 2007.

James Huff's career spanned decades of prominent positions from Laurel, MS to Washington, DC. His professional career began in 1956 as Assistant County Agent, Mississippi Agricultural Extension Service, and Covington County. He then became Director of Operations at Masonite Corporation in 1957 and held that position until 1989.

President George H. W. Bush appointed James Huff in 1989 as Mississippi's State Director of the Farmer's Home Administration. He served in that position until 1992. Huff's leadership and superior performance in Washington was well respected by our nation's leaders. President Bush then appointed him for

a ten-year term in 1992 as the Administrator of Rural Electrification for the United States in Washington, DC. Huff worked as the District Director for Congressman Chip Pickering, (R) Mississippi, District 3, from 1996 until retirement in 2004. In March, 2004, James Huff made the decision to retire to his Hebron home to enjoy his family and be a full-time tree farmer. He worked diligently to manage a multiple-use farm to sustain renewable resources in soil and water, wildlife habitat and forage, and tree management. He adeptly managed his farm, remained in an active role in community service, and still enjoyed his hobbies of hunting and fishing with his family.

If you had the honor of knowing James "Jim" Huff, you knew him to be a man of integrity, honor, commitment, and loyalty, as evidenced by the many friends who came to him for advice and assistance in personal and professional matters. But he would probably like to be remembered most as a servant of the Lord and faithful follower of Jesus Christ.

Pallbearers are: T. J. Jefferson, Wiley Pickering, J. T. Pickering, Jason Pickering, Jeff Graves, and Bill Reddoch. Honorary pallbearers will be: Gene Pickering, Stanley Shows, Chip Pickering, Mike Kenny, Fred Wansley, Joe Musgrove, Denvil Frailey, and Reubin Graves.

Dr. Wade Rogers, former pastor Hebron Baptist Church, and Reverend Bucky Erwin; current Hebron Pastor will conduct the services. Richard Thames will provide music worship, with eulogy by the Honorable Judge Charles Pickering.

Visitation will be held Tuesday, May 14, 2013 5-8 p.m. Funeral will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 15, 2013. All services will be held at Hebron Baptist Church, with burial in the Hebron Cemetery.

Memory Chapel is in charge of the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

IH

“ Dear Family, Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this very sad time in your life.

Love, Jack and Iris Hilton

Iris Hilton - May 18, 2013 at 02:42 PM

TW

“ May God be with you all.. God Bless you JIM and Ben..

Tommy Welborn - May 18, 2013 at 12:25 AM

LL

“ To the Huff Family, I had the priviledge of working as James' Secretary at Masonite 51 years ago, fresh out of JCJC's Intensive Business Course, barely 19 years old. He was always kind, compassionate, and encouraging. He attended my wedding three years later. I moved to California and I never saw him again. But I have never forgotten the fine man I had the honor of working for. He will always be well thought of in Mississippi, Washington, DC and by a long ago Secretary in California. My sincere condolences.

Linda Hosey Lowrimore

Linda Hosey Lowrimore - May 17, 2013 at 02:11 PM

CC

“ To Jim's family and friends; You have my thoughts and prayers over Jim's death. I knew him from his service as Administrator of the REA and when he worked for Rep. Pickering. Wonderful man and very helpful to me even after he left Washington, D.C.

Claiborn H. Crain - May 17, 2013 at 09:54 AM

SB

“ Jim was such a fine man - outstanding in every way and such a wonderful friend and mentor to me. I was truly blessed to know him and work with him. We will all miss him so. My love and prayers to his dear family!

Susan Butler - May 17, 2013 at 08:30 AM

WW

“ Marilyn, I am so very sorry for Your Loss; however, it is a loss for a lot of us. I truly enjoyed talking to Jim at EDA Board meetings. Prayers for You and Your Family.

Wayne Waldrep - May 15, 2013 at 05:34 PM

EJ

“ I had the privilege of serving under Mr. Huff when he was the REA Administrator and I was the Chief of Operations for the Northeast Electric Division. He was a very honorable man of the highest moral character who treated his employees with respect. It was a n honor to have served our country with him.

Edward J. Stapanon, Jr. - May 15, 2013 at 11:50 AM

MJ

“ Your in my thoughts and prayers.

Melinda Johnson - May 15, 2013 at 10:45 AM

DS

“ Sorry to hear of the passing of Mr Huff. I was the MS General Field Representative of REA while he was Administrator and respected him greatly.

Donald L. Stone - May 15, 2013 at 09:14 AM

RR

“ Mrs. Marilyn, Melanie, and Jim; May God wrap his loving arms around you and provide comfort during this difficult time. I am very sorry for your loss and you have my deepest sympathy. God bless, Richard Rose.

Richard Rose - May 14, 2013 at 10:20 PM

DS

“ Mel & Tim,
We are sorry for your lost but we all know they are not lost if we know where they are. Mel, your father was a great man and will be truly miss by all who knew him. I know you are thankful to be among the women who was bless with the gift of a Christian father.
Love, The Shedd's (Dean and Angie, Brandon and Stephen and DeShawn Clairmont)

Dean & Angie Shedd - May 14, 2013 at 10:20 PM

RG

“ Please accept my deepest sympathies in the passing of Mr. James Huff. I respected James, and appreciated him as a man of deep conviction. He served on my ordination council, and his signature remains on the certificate as a testimony to his participation in that honor. My prayers are with the family as they grieve this time of loss, anticipating the day of resurrection and the hope that is found in Jesus Christ.

Rev. Mark Gervais - May 14, 2013 at 10:13 PM

DG

“ I am so sorry to hear about Mr. James. The family will be in our thoughts & prayers.

Darlene Temple Gibson - May 14, 2013 at 07:36 PM

SE

“ So sorry to hear about Mr. James. I thought the world of him and the years I worked at the Farm Service Agency were made more enjoyable because of my contact with him. Now my son, John Sumrall Jr. and his wife, Joey and family has had the joy of attending church with James. He will be greatly missed on so many levels.

Shirley Grafton Evans - May 14, 2013 at 03:22 PM