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Death Notices

Conner

Victor Ivan Conner, Sr. passed away March 30, 2023.

He is survived by his wife of seventy years, Iris; daughter, Rebecca Whatley and husband Bob; daughter, Vicky Conner; and son, Vic Conner, Jr. and wife Von. Other survivors include nine grandchildren, twenty-one great-grandchildren, and nine great-great-grandchildren.

Visitation was held from 8:30 am to 8 pm, Monday, April 3, 2023, at Shaffer Funeral Home, Robert Lee, Texas. Funeral services were held at 10 am, Tuesday, April 4, 2023, at Southside Church of Christ in Robert Lee. A graveside service with military honor immediately followed Robert Lee Cemetery.



American Idol, Part 4: Woodrow and Gus

By James M. Decker

Woodrow F. Call and August McCrae were not good people.

Now that I've gotten your attention and perhaps enraged or alienated a few of you, let us wrap the journey through Western literature and film. There's no better place to do so than the rare story that would go on the Mount Rushmore of BOTH literature and film, "Lonesome Dove."

As some readers might know, this masterpiece almost took a very different path. After their collaboration on the award-winning film "The Last Picture Show," Larry McMurtry and Peter Bogdanovich set out to write a Western screenplay. They envisioned John Wayne as Woodrow F. Call, Jimmy Stewart as August McCrae, and Henry Fonda as Jake Spoon. Wayne turned down the role on the advice of John Ford, who disliked the script (which makes sense, since the final product is a

very not-John Ford Western). The project was shelved for over a decade until McMurtry turned the script into a novel. It won the Pulitzer Prize and spawned one of the most successful television miniseries of all time, starring Tommy Lee Jones, Robert Duvall, and Robert Urich instead of the original cast.

McMurtry's relationship with the Western was complicated. His ancestors in Archer County, Texas (about 80 miles from where I currently sit) scraped out a life on the hard frontier. His views on and resentment of the "classic" Western were colored by his knowledge of the frontier and its people. They lived very different lives from what he saw in Technicolor and as told by John Ford and John Wayne in Monument Valley. McMurtry wrote almost three dozen novels and over a dozen non-fiction works that spanned the eras from the "Old West" to suburban life in Houston. He wrote of the West, but it was the changing West. Cowboys owned automobiles, worked day jobs in town, and could be rather ignoble characters. "Leaving Cheyenne", "The Last Picture Show", and "Horseman, Pass By" were Westerns in a very non-classic but very realistic sense. When McMurtry sought to demythologize the old-time cowboy via "Lonesome Dove," he unintentionally created two heroes, Woodrow and Gus, as a

result.

My love for McMurtry and "Lonesome Dove" is no secret. When McMurtry died in 2021, I penned a tribute in this very space. In that very tribute, I discussed the flaws and personal failings of his two most famous characters. Despite holding some important and deeply-rooted ethical views on matters like the rental of pigs, their lives as decorated Texas Rangers had degenerated to a glorified livestock fencing operation, dealing in stolen and re-stolen cattle. They were self-aware of some failings and too prideful to acknowledge others. Their actions—sometimes selfish, sometimes careless, and sometimes unnecessarily single-minded—put loved ones in harm's way and even got a few of them killed. Their longtime sidekick Jake Spoon learned all of Gus's vices without holding an ounce of his charm or sense and Jake caused deep harm to others as a result.

If Woodrow and Gus were purely irredeemable characters, they would not have been believable and, frankly, the book would have been bad art. Others might write such a novel, but McMurtry was far too talented for that. He set out to write "heroes" that were not heroes at all. He succeeded. He was too skilled of a writer to not make these incorrigible humans into multi-dimensional, fascinating

Area Churches

Invite You to Worship

Bronte

Bronte Church of Christ

PO Box 346
118 S. Jefferson • Bronte
Sun. 10 am & 6 pm, Wed. 7 pm

Central Baptist Church

324 S. Franklin • Bronte
(325) 473-4811
Dale Patterson, Pastor
Sun. 10 am Sunday School
11 am & 5 pm Worship

First Baptist Church

424 S. Washington • Bronte
(325) 473-2331
firstbronte@gmail.com
Pastor George Cooper
Sunday 9:45 am Sunday School,
10:30 am Worship
Wednesday 6 pm - 8 pm
Children and Youth

First United Methodist Church

Corner of Washington & Holmes
Bronte • (325) 650-4836
Sun. 11:00 am Worship

St. James Catholic Church

215 N. Washington, Bronte
(325) 365-2687
Rev. Timothy Hayter, Pastor
Sunday Bilingual Mass 8 am

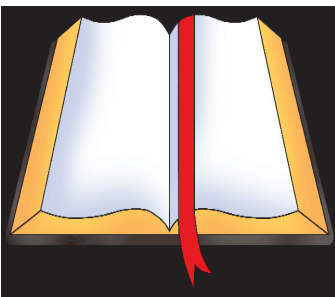
4C Cowboy Church

Drawer R • Bronte • (325) 895-4080
Robert Lemmond, Pastor
Sunday, 10:30 am - Texas Theater
Wednesday Bible Study 6 pm -
4C Feedlot Youth Building

Coke County

Pecan Baptist

PO Box 542 • 12 miles West of
Robert Lee on Sterling City Hwy
(325) 453-2065, Bill Hood, Pastor
www.pecanbaptistchurchrl.com
Sun. 10 am, Sunday School
11 am & 7 pm, Worship



Robert Lee

Bible Baptist Church

PO Box 938 • 9th & Austin
Sunday 10 am Sunday School,
11 am and 5 pm Worship,
Wed 5 pm Bible Study

Emmanuel Pentecostal

PO Box 794 • 1004 Hillcrest
Pastor Brantly Robertson
(972) 841-2009

Sundays 10 am, Wednesdays 7 pm

First United Methodist Church

PO Box 144 • 9th & Chadbourne
Robert Lee • (325) 453-2417
Cyndi Weidner, Pastor
Sun. 10 am Sunday School
11 am Worship,
5 pm Choir Practice

Iglesia Bautista Betel

101 Houston • Robert Lee
Sun. 9:45 am • Sunday School
11 am Service • Bible Study Wed. 6 pm

Southside Church of Christ

PO Box 698 • 8th & Houston
Robert Lee (325) 453-2176
Recardo Reyes, Preacher
Sun. 10 am, Sunday School
11 am & 6 pm, Worship

Wed. 6 pm, Worship

Northside Church of Christ

PO Box 508
9th & Chadbourne • Robert Lee
(325) 453-2685, (325) 763-2118
or (325) 473-1053
Services: Sun. 10 am

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church

601 W. 10th, Robert Lee
(325) 365-2687

Rev. Timothy Hayter, Pastor
Saturday Vigil Mass 6 pm

Robert Lee Baptist Church

PO Box 493 • 22 W. 11th
(325) 453-2724
Chris Walls, Pastor
Sun. 9:45 am, Sunday School
11 am & 7 pm, Worship

Wed. 7 pm, Prayer Meeting

Victory Assembly of God

(325) 453-2208, PO Box 638
202 E. 6th Street, Robert Lee
Rev. Rocky Youngblood, Pastor
Sun. 9:45 am, Sunday School
10:45 am & 6 pm, Worship
Wed. 6 pm, Bible Study

Obituaries



Heffernan

Patrick Emmett "Rocky" Heffernan passed away at his home, January 21, 2023, in Miles, Texas, with his wife of almost 60 years beside him, as he wanted after being sent home with hospice.

Rocky was born December 24, 1938, to John "Jack" and Alvina Marie Johannsen Heffernan, in Dow City, Iowa. His mother gave him his nickname "Rocky" for always having rocks in his pockets as a child.

Rocky attended St. Rose of Lima Catholic School in Denison, Iowa. He joined the Navy in 1956 and through 1962 he served 6 years on the Roosevelt during the Lebanon venue and the beginning of Vietnam. He then joined his brother-in-law and brother in the meat business with Hutcheson Meats, which brought him to Dallas, Texas.

In 1963, he met his wife Phebe Casey, in a butcher shop in Dallas and they married 6 weeks later. They moved quite a bit initially; Nebraska, Missouri, Arizona and many others; eventually settling down in Texas and he worked in the oilfields and with his father-in-law, Turney Casey, drilling water wells.

Phebe and Rocky celebrated 59 years and 6 months years of marriage. It wasn't always easy but their love endured along with all the laughter and teasing over the years.

Rocky loved his Cornhuskers and enjoyed watching his grandchildren grow up, he and Phebe went to every football, basketball, track, golf, dance recital and fundraiser that they could make it to and supported their grandchildren with enthusiasm.

Rocky struggled with alcoholism until he won the battle in 1998 and that gave us all more time to spend together. It was life changing for him and for all of us and he was one of the best Pau's to his grandchildren.

Rocky loved a good visit on the porch from friends or on the phone. He had one of the best laughs! Even when he was laughing at you; you were laughing with him. He never met a stranger and could befriend anyone immediately.

Rocky and Phebe had two children, Patrick John, and Stacey Christine and in 2020 he found his son, Michael Patrick Bowers.

Rocky is survived by his wife, Phebe; sons, Michael (Christine), Patrick (Deborah); and daughter, Stacey (Jason); his grandchildren, Evan Braswell, Brandon Elfring (Linda), Chelsie Heffernan (Nathan), Andra Herrington (Brandon), Brandon Roberts (Stacy), Megan Cribb (Donald), Jesse Braswell (Gwyndolyn), Ethan Bowers (Diana), Seth Roberts (Karli), Ryan Heffernan (Kelsi) and Kayla Walker (Cody); and 21 great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his sister, Mary Egan and brother, Larry Heffernan; as well as friends "family" Jim and Sharon Arnold and Adam Sallee and sons.

He is preceded in death by his parents; his great-granddaughter, Madison Herrington; his sisters, Karen Carl and Jackie Carl brother, David Heffernan; his in-laws, Turney and Irma Casey brother-in-law, Bill Casey; and sister-in-law, Dwala "Kentucky", as he called her.

Private services will be held later with interment at Valley View Cemetery, in Robert Lee, Texas.

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Edward Jones

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