



James Otis Buckles

May 5, 1939 - March 20, 2013

James Otis son of Lois E. (Richards) and John A. Buckles was born May 5, 1939 in Shattuck, Oklahoma. He passed away at Beadles Nursing Home on the 20th of March at the age of 73 years, 10 months and 15 days.

He attended Dacoma public schools and Northwestern Oklahoma State University where he received his Bachelors and Masters Degree in Education. James married Joretta Shelite; to their marriage two daughters, Brenda and Kimberly were born.

He taught in Mineola, Kansas for two years before coming to Alva where he taught Social Studies and P.E. at Longfellow Elementary, finishing his career at the Alva Junior High. Besides teaching he was a farmer and rancher in the Dacoma area.

Jim was a member of Alva First United Methodist Church, Board of Directors Federal Land Bank Western Oklahoma, Dacoma Co-Op Board member and past President, and treasurer of Short Springs Cemetery for many years.

He was preceded in death by his parents Lois and John Buckles.

Jim is survived by his wife, Joretta, two daughters and their husbands, Brenda and Mike Ridgway, of Stillwater, and Kimberly and David Crawshaw, of Owasso; six grandchildren, Josh and Molly Ridgway, Megan, Mason, Madden and Mackenzie Crawshaw; a brother and his wife, Bill and Billie Buckles, of Alva; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made in his memory to

Beadles Nursing Home or First United Methodist Church.

PDF Printable Version

Previous Events

Memorial Service

MAR **25**. 2:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church
626 College Ave.
Alva, Ok

Tribute Wall

RE

“ I just learned of Mr. Buckles' passing, and I wanted to extend my condolences to all of his family and friends. As a Longfellow Wildcat in the late 60's/early 70's, I have fond memories of Mr. Buckles as a teacher and coach, especially playing basketball against Washington and Lincoln elementary schools and the Little Olympics at the athletic field at Northwestern. Riding the bus up to the college for a full day of track and field was always a highlight of the school year. Mr. Buckles was a wonderful educator and a kind and caring man, and one of the few teachers I remember so vividly all these years later. May he rest in peace.

Randy Evans - April 25, 2013 at 12:00 AM

LY

“ We have just learned of Jim's passing -- Jim and his wife Joretta where one of the first couples we meet when we moved to Dacoma in 1996 and they where dear friend and GREAT neighbors until we moved in January 2012 ... Jim was always a happy person and always had a good word for everyone... We had the privilege of saying goodbye to Jim just before we moved in 2012 and he will always be remembered as a GREAT PERSON our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife and family... Lou and Margaret Young

Luther A. and Margaret B Young - March 29, 2013 at 12:00 AM

“ Whenever I think of my elementary school teacher Mr. Buckles, the first thing that pops into my head is that Mr. Buckles belonged to me, and he belonged to my brother, Ken.

Teachers play pivotal roles in the lives of all of us, but from my perspective as a student without a father in my home, I can't overstate the influence of a teacher, coach, mentor, and father-like presence of a man like Mr. Buckles. When we moved to Alva in the early '70s, Ken and I enrolled in Longfellow Elementary in first and fifth grades, respectively. Our parents had recently divorced, and our father lived forever away. It's not an uncommon family situation, but, still, a difficult one. I viewed Mr. Buckles as a man I could count on. I always felt that from him. He was purpose-driven. He was engaged and passionate in the classroom. He was present. He was animated and enthusiastic on the basketball court in practice. And when our girls' team of sixth-graders played Washington's and Lincoln's teams, it was apparent to me that our coach wanted us to win as much as we did.

Unfortunately our Longfellow Wildcats were less than successful the year of my participation on the sixth-grade team. I felt bad about that. Unlike my brother, a natural and gifted athlete, I was...what's the word? "Ineffectual" on the basketball court is one way to put it. "Abysmal" would also work here. Consequently, I was unable to contribute much to winning. That troubled me a great deal, so much so, in fact, that my mother confided this to Mr. Buckles, aware of my regard for him. I remember vividly the resulting conversation he had with me.

In school one day he pulled me aside, the warmth in his eyes telling me I had nothing to fear. He said that my mother had shared with him my feelings of inferiority on the basketball court. What I remember most clearly (and what brings tears to my eyes as I write this) is how careful and tender he was with me, an 11-year-old girl whose heart was as fragile as tissue paper.

"Terri," he said, "these other girls have been playing basketball since they were in first grade. That's six times longer than you."

Then he smiled. "But they are not six times better than you."

Then I smiled. For me the conversation wasn't about basketball any

more. He very much wanted to bolster my confidence, fix my hurt. I don't think he would mind that much if he knew I didn't feel a bit better about myself as a basketball player. I did feel better about myself, however—in a profound and deeply satisfying way.

Leaving Longfellow to enter junior high did not mean leaving Mr. Buckles. Happily for me, his daughter Brenda and I were very close friends. I spent many, many days and nights in the Buckles' home, and they often included me in Sunday afternoon excursions to Brenda's grandparents' home for dinner. What lovely and welcoming people, that family. How I treasured their including me, as if I were their own.

I went on to find my own way in Alva, a town I grew to love. I flourished there, making wonderful, lifelong friends, discovering passions and developing talents in Alva public schools that have profoundly enriched my life. It was Mr. Buckles who placed me on the path of embracing the unfamiliar that surrounded me, and it was he who convinced me that I didn't have to be a basketball player or have roots in the community to be a valued member of it.

In a town where most of its citizens, including Mr. Buckles, had generations of familial roots grounding them, at a time that I was convinced a young girl's basketball prowess was the measure of her worth, and at a time when my own father lived a thousand miles away, Mr. Buckles welcomed me into his classroom, onto his basketball court, and into his home. As my teacher, coach, and as a father figure, Mr. Buckles conveyed to me one thing over and over—I did belong. I belonged to him.

Terri Clark Beckham

Terri Clark Beckham - March 25, 2013 at 12:00 AM

SB

“ To Jim Buckles family, I'm so sorry for your loss. I saw Jim last July and had a very nice visit with him and Joretta. I know that he is with his heavebly Father now, and he always believed he would be. Jnow that he is there waiting for all of you.

Seva Lou Bullard - March 25, 2013 at 12:00 AM

VW

“ Our deepest sympathy and prayers are with the Buckles family. I was teaching during the time Jim and Joretta taught and I admired both of them.

Virgil and Lavon Wiersig - March 25, 2013 at 12:00 AM

MN

“ our thoughts an prayers for the family. Jim an Joretta were great neighbors i worked for Jim for quite a few years he was very special person to our family an to the town an people of Dacoma he will be trully missed

mark Anne Burkes & Nicholas - March 25, 2013 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ Sorry for your loss. I will be sending prayers your way as you go through this difficult time. I was fortunate to get to visit with Mr. Buckles at Beadles while visiting my grandmother over the holidays. He made my day by telling me I hadn't changed a bit. Such a charmer but we both got a smile on our faces.

JoVona (Hofen) Matthiesen - March 24, 2013 at 12:00 AM

DC

“ *Mr. Buckles was one of my favorite teachers. He was always nice and friendly. He will be greatly missed. May God be with you during this time and may you be comforted by your memories.*

Donise Cinnamon - March 24, 2013 at 12:00 AM

KB

“ *Mr. Haley and Mr. Buckles, 2 of the very best teachers I ever had, even if I was a bit ornery at times.
Mr. Buckles ran a really fun P.E program and I really liked his 6th grade social studies class.
I was in 2nd grade PE when one day in the early spring qtr. when this huge African-American male was brought in by Mr. B and introduced as our student teacher. He happened to be a BB player at NWOSU. It was most of us 2nd graders, at least mine, 1st exp. to interact with a person of a different culture, but Mr. Griffin was rally nice and a good student teacher. He now has a son you may had heard of Blake Griffin of LA Clippers NBA fame.
Mr. Buckles always seemed to want us to try our best. The softball games at noon recess were legendary. Three fields at once. He along with Mr. Haley influenced me to go into public eduction.
Unfortunately the federal gov't has encouraged many, including myself to leave.
You were a respected and well thought of as a parent by your 2 lovely daughters, your former students and the friendships you developed by your many years of giving of yourself to your community,
May peace be with you Mr. Buckles on the other side of the veil.
Kevin B.*

Kevin Beeler - March 24, 2013 at 12:00 AM

TC

“ *Sending prayers o comfort and strength.*

Tammy Clark - March 23, 2013 at 12:00 AM

AW

“ I have many fond memories of my cousin Jim. When my family visited Oklahoma, Jim always had time for his younger cousin, hunting, fishing, driving the tractor, shooting the chickens with a homemade slingshot. We will miss his cheerful spirit.

Andy Welsch - March 23, 2013 at 12:00 AM

DS

“ Our sincere sympathy to each of you in the loss of Jim. We pray you may find comfort in special memories, and that your hearts will be warmed by the love which only our Lord can provide.

Dale & Vaughna Schmidt - March 23, 2013 at 12:00 AM

LL

“ Joretta, so sorry for your loss. I have often thought of you and wondered where you were. I did not know your husband but I hope you remember me, Linda Highfill.

Linda Lovelady - March 23, 2013 at 12:00 AM

BB

“ Joretta, Brenda & Kimberly and families so sorry to learn of the passing of your loved one. Mr. Buckles was a very respected teacher, friend, and someone you could always talk to. He had our children first. May you find peace in knowing the many lives he touched throughout the years. Love to all. The Beeler Family

Bill and Linda Beeler - March 22, 2013 at 12:00 AM

DW

“ James Otis Buckles

Dudley & Jeanne Winn - March 22, 2013 at 12:00 AM

LS

“ *Sorry for you loss. My prayers are with your family.*

Lisa Small-Boler - March 22, 2013 at 12:00 AM

TS

“ *Although I haven't seen Jim in several years, I always considered him a friend since I first met Him and Bill back in the 60's while working for the Leslie's, and then cutting wheat for them with the Longhurst crew. My prayers are with the family at this time of grief.*

Terry Smith - March 22, 2013 at 12:00 AM

RK

“ *A wonderful person, our thoughts & prayers go out to the family.*

Roger & Pauline Kassik - March 22, 2013 at 12:00 AM

IC

“ *We will miss Jim. Kay had the opportunity to observe his elementary physical education classes at Longfellow, then later took over his position....he had a wonderful program so I had big shoes to fill! Ira Dale enjoyed teaching with Jim at the Jr.High level. We enjoyed him in our Sunday School Class . Jim will be missed!*

Ira Dale and Kay Campbell - March 21, 2013 at 12:00 AM