



Jan Hamilton Richards

August 16, 1939 - January 17, 2023

Jan (Hamilton) Richards (83), a longtime resident of Roswell and public servant for the Roswell Independent School District for over 25 years, passed away in his home on January 13, 2023.

There will be a viewing on Thursday, January 19, 2023, from 3 PM to 5 PM at Anderson Bethany Funeral Home. A funeral service will be held Friday, January 20, 2023, at 11 AM at Grace Community Church. Interment will follow to the Fort Sumner Cemetery.

Those left to cherish Jan's memory are a brother, Greg Richards of Sheridan; Wyo., his high school sweetheart and wife of 62 years, Wynell Richards; daughter, Shauna (Richards) and spouse Steve Smith of Ft. Worth, TX; two sons: Garrett Richards with Becky Creel of Roswell and Lance Richards of Austin, TX; beloved grandchildren: Jordan Creel and spouse Meghan Creel, Sydney Smith, Sophie Smith, and Sage Richards; as well as his great-grandchildren Jase and Abby Creel.

Jan married Wynell on June 10th, 1960 and for the next six decades, they raised a loving family. He was the true embodiment of what a father figure should be to his children and raised them to be strong in spirit and mind, as he himself was. Jan never faltered in his role as father, teacher, friend, and role model and for this, he brought out the best characteristics in his children and

his children's children. His grandchildren and great-grandchildren were the love of his life and he enjoyed every precious minute with them. His second passion was sports and he loved to run six to eight miles a day. In Jan's later years, his health kept him from running, which was hard for him not to be able to, but he still stayed active whether it was walking his beloved dogs or just working around the yard. Many years after Jan retired even still attended the high school football games at the Wool Bowl because he loved the sport and all it entailed.

Jan was born on August 16th, 1939, in Lubbock TX. to Bernie and Dorothy Howell, who both preceded him in death. He is also preceded in death by his stepfather Waymon Richards who raised him since he was sixteen years old. His family moved to Ft. Sumner when he was in high school where he participated in football, basketball, and track. He won a track scholarship to Western New Mexico University in Silver City, majoring in physical education with minors in science, sociology, and safety education. Richards still to this day has track records that have never been broken at WNMU and Fort Sumner High School. Jan's first job after college landed him at Stout Junior High in Silver City, where he coached high school cross country, junior high track, football, and basketball. In 1962, the first year of this new job, his cross-country team won the state championship in the big classification. The next year Jan moved to Clovis, NM where for the next five years he would coach basketball, football, and track at Gattis Junior High.

The next opportunity brought Jan to Roswell, NM where he would spend the next 28 years coaching and teaching science at Goddard High School as well as refereeing basketball and football games all over the state. He once said that he has refereed over 2,500 football and basketball games in his life. He retired from teaching in 1993 but because of his steadfast desire to share his knowledge and values to young minds, continued coaching cross country and substitute teaching for the RISD for years after. During his many years of

coaching, teaching, and refereeing, Jan received numerous awards and accolades for his contributions, two of which included being inducted into the New Mexico Officials Association Hall Of Fame in 1997, and the Western New Mexico University Athletic Hall Of Fame in 1995. But his most satisfying rewards came in the form of shaping and guiding students in a way that would impact their lives for years to come. Some of his former students whom he made an impact on, now well into their 50's and 60's with families of their own, have admitted that if it weren't for his guidance and perseverance, they would not be where they are today. He saw the worth in students and strived to exploit that worth to their benefit in order to prepare them for their future lives.

As a longtime University Of Texas Longhorn fan, Jan bled "Burnt Orange". Anybody could see that when strolling around his home. From the scoreboard clock above the fireplace mantel to the Longhorn Tiffany glass lamp, to the "Longhorn Room" filled wall to wall with UT paraphernalia. His social nature and willingness to approach anyone in the street to strike up a conversation led him to a hotel lobby in Lubbock Texas one day where he recognized and approached legendary UT Longhorn football coach Darrell Royal. Jan told Darrell, "Let me tell you a story", and proceeded to tell him about one of his students with lots of potentials whom he helped receive a scholarship for the University of Texas. The story goes that the student flew down to Austin for a weekend to attend orientation and was shown around town. He told Jan that they took him to some coach's house to which Jan replied "Which coach? Was it the football coach?" He said, "Yeah I think so". Jan asked, "Was his name Darrell Royal?" He replied, "Yeah I think so". He had been to the house of one of the country's most renowned coaches and didn't even know who he was! Darrell told Jan, "I know him!", laughed and said he was a good kid. He also told Jan, "When Edith and I fly out of Austin, he'd meet us at the airport and take our car home with him, and when we'd return, we'd call him up and he'd pick us up at the airport in our car." This is one of many stories in Jan's

life where he saw potential in someone....and made it happen. He will be greatly missed by those who loved him the most, and those whose lives he touched in one way or the other.

Those honored to serve as pallbearers are Garrett Richards, Lance Richards, Steve Smith, Jordan Creel, Donnie Dobbins, and Jeff Neagle.

Jan's tribute was lovingly written by his family.

In honor of Jan, the family would love for you to wear burnt orange or Texas Longhorn attire

Previous Events

Viewing

JAN **19**. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (MT)

Anderson-Bethany Funeral Home and Crematory
2609 South Main
Roswell, NM 88203
(575) 622-5888
abfh@andersonbethany.com

Tribute Wall

JP

“ Played football & basketball for Coach Richard’s at Gattis Jr High, 1964-1967...what a truly amazing influence on my life. Now, some 60- years later I obviously still think of him. My favorite memory: I made my dad swing by Gattis to say goodbye to Coach Richard’s on our way out of town. I overheard him say to a colleague as I was leaving, “There goes a good one.” Stayed with me the rest of my life!

Jim Playford - February 29, 2024 at 10:58 PM

AT

“ Hookem” to the entire Richard's family in Loving Memory of Jan!
Jan is definitely in the Longhorn section of heaven right with my father!

Love and blessings to the family!

Sincerest blessings,

Amy McVay Tellez and Family 🙌 🙌 🙌 🙌



Amy McVay Tellez - February 14, 2023 at 11:16 PM

PG

“ To the Richards family my condolences, I have known Coach Richards for 40 years and while I was in high school, he was always showing me how to become better and to strive to be the best I could be. His dedication to helping others and putting his needs aside made him better than the rest. GOD Bless
Patrick Garcia

Patrick Garcia - January 30, 2023 at 10:40 PM

VH

“ Our sincere condolences to Wynell and family. Will miss seeing Jan at all the basketball, football, track meets and running in to him shopping. I remember him at track meets here in Roswell the most. He always had an encouraging word for and about our girls. Wonderful attitude and good friend to my older siblings. You will be missed Jan. You “fought the good fight, finished the race, and kept the faith” Hugs and prayers.
Robert and Vicki Hobbs

Vicki Hobbs - January 24, 2023 at 02:35 PM

RH

“ Mr Richards was my high school track coach. Rest in peace good sir.

Richard Harkness - January 23, 2023 at 12:45 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Jan Hamilton Richards.



January 19, 2023 at 03:43 PM

CG

“ Coach or Mr Richard's was one of the finest men I had the privilege of knowing.He was one of my favorite teachers I will always be thankful for him Rest in Peace coach

Chris Graham - January 19, 2023 at 12:10 AM

JW

“ *Became friends with Jan years ago when I coached midschool basketball. He was the only Reff that gave me two technical fouls in one game with a smile on his face. A great man, we always talked when we would meet somewhere in town. My prayers are with you.*

John R Wrinkle - January 18, 2023 at 10:29 PM

CB

“ *Dearest Wynell, Shauna, Garett, and Lance,*

I am thinking of all of you and keeping you close to my heart. I have so many wonderful memories of your precious family.

*With Love,
Cassie Banks*

cassie banks - January 18, 2023 at 08:37 PM



“ *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Jan Hamilton Richards.*



January 18, 2023 at 06:24 PM

WS

“ *Jan Richards was a very opinionated Texas Longhorn supporter and I always enjoyed visiting with him. He was the focus of any party we had. I will always remember the story about him running over his dog's tail with his lawnmower. We had some good laughs and that was always a good thing. May he rest in peace.*

Wayne Smith - January 18, 2023 at 06:15 PM

DB

“ On behalf of the members of our Facebook Group Page "Remembering Fort Sumner" we offer our sincere prayers and condolences to the family and friends of Jan Richards. May the Lord provide strength to family and friends during this difficult time.

Dale Burge - January 18, 2023 at 06:12 PM

SS

“ Papa was not only a great grandfather, but he was my role model. To say that I am thankful to be one of his grandchildren, is truly an understatement. It is my biggest blessing, and I will be forever grateful. He loved to share with us all of his life experiences, and that truly is such an amazing memory we have of him. I will love you forever papa, you will forever be in my heart.
- Sydney Smith

Sydney Smith - January 18, 2023 at 03:22 PM

TR

“ Jan is an excellent example of why teachers are such an integral part of a community. Jan was a positive force in the lives of his students both in the academic and athletic components of their lives. THANKS Jan for your dedication to our children. God give the family peace in a time of personal loss. Tom and Judy Ramage

Tom Ramage - January 18, 2023 at 12:01 PM

RM

“ I officiated football with Jan from 1980-1991. I will always remember if he drove to a game especially on the way to Eunice or Jal, NM he would always play the University of Texas fight song. Whenever I would see him he was always willing to talk about this game or that game what calls were made. He was always very direct and what you see is what you get. Rest in Peace my friend.

Robert Mendoza - January 18, 2023 at 11:34 AM

DR

“ I worked with Jan as a track assistant the first four years of my 40 years coaching career. He taught me that coaching should be fun. We never lost the doughnut 300! He also was committed to the details of what ever event we were working on, be it discus or two mile. RIP Coach Richards, you will always have a special place in my heart.
With deepest sympathy,
Doug Ragsdale.

Doug Ragsdale - January 18, 2023 at 09:04 AM

AM

“ Adelina Wright Martinez lit a candle in memory of Jan Hamilton Richards



Adelina Wright Martinez - January 18, 2023 at 02:44 AM

AM

my favorite coach...he had an Impact on my life

Adelina Wright Martinez - January 18, 2023 at 02:46 AM

RS

“ Wynie, my dear friend since grade school. I am so sorry for your loss. You and Jan had many happy years together. Cherish your memories of the love of your life. My thoughts and prayers to you and your family.
Love, Ruby Archuleta Schutte and Max too.

Ruby Schutte - January 17, 2023 at 05:37 PM



“ *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Jan Hamilton Richards.*



January 17, 2023 at 05:37 PM



“ *Wynell, I am so sorry to hear about your loss. You and Jan were always so happy and fun to be around. When we were at Washington Ave, he always made time to speak to everyone, the times he came by to see you. My prayers are with you and your family.*

*God Bless and Keep You,
Jan Neff*

jan neff - January 17, 2023 at 04:09 PM