



Mr James L Kelly

October 12, 2017

James Leonard (Jim) Kelly died Wednesday, October 11, at the age of 80, following a long battle with Alzheimer's Disease. He was a native of Wagarville, Alabama.

Kelly attended Leroy High School. While at Leroy, he served as Senior Class President and played baseball, basketball and football. In 1954, he accepted a football scholarship to the University of Alabama and attended school there his freshman year. He later transferred to East Mississippi Community College in Scooba, Mississippi, where he excelled and many years later was added to the school's Athletic Hall of Fame. He continued on to graduate from Livingston University (now the University of West Alabama).

Kelly moved to Foley where he taught and coached from 1959-1964. While in Foley, he met his wife of 57 years, Paula (Polly) Blackmon Kelly. In 1964, the couple moved to Tuscaloosa so he could obtain his Masters degree in Guidance and Counseling from the University of Alabama. Upon receiving his degree, the couple moved to Crestview, Florida, where he served as head football coach. Kelly's second year at Crestview High School was the team's first winning season in many years, with the team going 9-1. Shortly afterward they moved back to Foley, where Kelly coached for a year before taking a position as guidance counselor at George Stone Vocational Center in Pensacola, Florida. He worked at George Stone for 35 years before retiring. In his retirement Kelly enjoyed spending time with his family and keeping up with old friends. He became interested in genealogy and spent much time

researching his family's origins. And he never lost his love for sports! He loved cheering for the Foley Lions and attended games until he could no longer maneuver safely through the crowds. He also loved watching college sports of any type. His favorite spot in his home was the recliner in the family den. From there he loved cheering on teams, his favorite of which was, without a doubt, the University of Alabama's Crimson Tide!

Kelly was preceded in death by his parents, Leonard Leroy and Annie-Mae Sullivan Kelly of Wagarville, AL. He is survived by his wife, Polly; two sons, James Leonard Kelly, Jr. and Paul Darren (Kim) Kelly; and one daughter, Karen Kelly (Briley) Shirah. Also mourning his loss are eight grandchildren, James Leonard Kelly, III, of Washington, DC; Meredith Caroline Kelly of Athens, AL; Henry Holmes Kelly of Oxford, MS; Ann Seery Kelly and Camille Dawn Kelly of Pine Mountain, GA; and Logan Briley Shirah, William Taylor Shirah and Brady Joseph Shirah of Mobile, AL; one brother, Maury Britton (Thelia) Kelly; one sister, Cheryl Kelly (William) Brown; as well as numerous nieces, nephews and friends.

A Memorial Service will be held in the Family Life Center at Foley United Methodist Church on Thursday, October 19, at 11:00 AM. A Visitation will be held prior to the service at 10:00.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that contributions be made to cover the medical care of Kelly's great-nephew, Baxter Duddy. Seven-year-old Baxter has been fighting his own battle with a recurring Ependymoma Brain Tumor for the past two years. Contributions can be made at <http://www.gofundme.com/baxterduddy> or by sending a check directly to Baxter Duddy, 12211 County Road 95, Elberta, AL 36530. More information can be found on Facebook at Bax Strong.