

Daddy  
By Alicia Ezell

There are so many things that I will remember about my daddy. We sat down as a group to just talk about him this week. We laughed like crazy, at times through tears. It was such a pleasure and a comfort for me to hear what family and friends had to say. Sarah and I even learned some things about Daddy we could have lived without. Please allow me to share on behalf of the family some of our thoughts.

My daddy was a faithful loving husband. This may not have been shown outwardly to many but we know the undeniable love and respect he had for my mom. They shared a faithful devotion to each other and our family which was the basis on which everything was built.

He was such a dedicated dad. Three things I remember looking back on my childhood. First, he was always home. He rarely took off doing anything for himself or just to hang with the guys. Even the occasional hunting trip was taken with family. Secondly, he was always working. It was just what he did every day rain or shine. He was a wonderful provider for us. Some would even argue that we were a little spoiled. The third thing was that he was always there. Regardless of the work to be done, he was going to be where ever we needed whenever we needed him. I didn't realize when I was young, unfortunately, that he was a Super Dad of sorts. Always home, yet always working, yet always there.

He was the most proud grandpa on the planet. Undoubtedly, his greatest joy was in watching his grandchildren grow up. His grandsons commented that it didn't matter what they were involved in or where, he just wanted to be a part of it. He was so proud of each one to find success at what ever they chose to pursue and showed it through his presence, encouragement and support. He loved being involved in their lives in any way he could. Some would argue that he bragged a bit too much, but it always sprang from his overwhelming love and pride for his family. In addition, a grandson noted that you can look around his house and see that he had nine grandchildren, but there are many others in this community who have called him Grandpa. Many people have said that he just had a way of bringing extended family and friends into our home and making them feel like part of our family.

Daddy was a very hardworking farmer. It was not just that he worked hard, but the attitude with which he worked. My mom said that in 57 years of marriage, she never heard him say he just didn't feel like going out to work. Grandsons and others alike commented on how he could wear out a much younger man in the course of a day's work and never complain about anything, except of course the officials from the prior night's ball game. Another grandson said that Grandpa's example taught him much about working hard to achieve success.

I know this will come a shock to many, but Daddy was also a fanatical sports enthusiast. He loved his Lincoln Wolves and Arkansas Razorbacks. It was just those darned officials that he never seemed to agree with.

There are many words I can use to describe Daddy as a friend. Tender hearted, compassionate, kind would be a good start. He worked hard and prospered well from his labors and believed in giving and sharing that with others. One could argue that he had a hard time saying no to anyone. Just ask Mom. Daddy was generous with his time, resources, and money as well as words of encouragement and support. There have been many times when he has gladly put his work aside to help friends with theirs knowing that his would still be there when he returned. Daddy went about the business of helping others in a very quiet way. I have only learned in recent years, mostly from Mom, of some of the ways people have counted on Daddy for help. Many of you in this room have been on the receiving end of that and the rest of us will never know. That is as it should be. One grandson shared that with Daddy every day was a new day. He could have a disagreement with someone, or even get downright mad, but when it was over it was over and he loved you none the less. That went for family and friends.

Sarah told me about a poem that inspired me to share these thoughts with you today. It is called The Dash and I would like to read just a portion.

I read of a man who stood to speak at the funeral of a friend. He referred to the dates on the tombstone from the beginning to the end. He noted that first came the date of birth and spoke the following date with tears, but he said what mattered most of all was the dash between the years. For that dash represents all the time that they spent alive here on earth. And now only those who loved them know what that little line is worth. For it matters

not, how much we own, the cars...the house....the cash. What matters is how we live and love and how we spend our dash.

As none of us do, Daddy didn't always get it right or always say the right things. As a matter of fact, some grandsons suggested that Grandpa always said knew what had happened even when he didn't really know what had happened. When I remember him, though, I will recall a good life lived by a good man. Daddy loved his family, his friends, his farm and the life he had been blessed to live.

I am very proud of the dash between your years.....I love you Daddy.