

James Owen Parker, 81

James Owen Parker, 81, of Bixby, Okla., passed away peacefully at Clarehouse on Saturday, July 10, 2010, after a long battle with Alzheimer's.

Born June 30, 1929, in Wagoner County, Okla., James was one of six children born to Jim and Grace Parker. He grew up in the Oak Grove area east of Broken Arrow, Okla., where he attended Oak Grove School. He lived a short time in the Verdigris River bottoms before moving to Tulsa, Okla., as a young man.

James held a couple different jobs before joining Gaso Pump as an oil field pump assembler in November 1953, retiring from the company just shy of 40 years of service in March 1993. He was a long-standing member of the International Association of Machinists (IAMAW) union while employed at Gaso.

James met his wife, Gladys "Marlene" Horton, through an acquaintance in the spring of 1957. The couple was married three months later on June 15, the same day the Belvedere was buried in downtown Tulsa. To this union was born four children. The couple resided in Tulsa until 1980, when they moved to their farm west of Bixby.

James loved his family and was active in their lives as a husband, father, provider and encourager. He enjoyed joking and was known for being "ornery" on occasion. Like Will Rogers, James never met a stranger. He loved to visit, especially with those who grew up in the Oak Grove and Verdigris River bottoms, or with anyone who would take time to talk about old times.

In the early years, James and Marlene enjoyed fishing and camping at Oologah Lake and holding cookouts with family at their Tulsa home. During the 1970s, the Parker family spent many vacations at Greenleaf State Park camping and fishing and took trips to California, Niagara Falls, Nashville, and the boot-heel of southeast Missouri to visit Marlene's family.

James enjoyed gardening and raised large gardens with every crop imaginable, often keeping Marlene busy canning in the kitchen. He also mowed yards to earn extra income and helped Marlene and his sons throw the Tulsa World and Tulsa Tribune newspapers for many years.

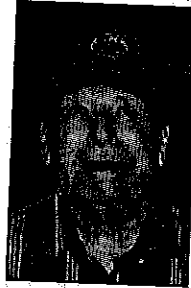
James took pride in keeping his Bixby farm looking nice and enjoyed being outside. He raised cattle for many years. After selling his calves in the late fall each year, he would often do something nice for the family. He also enjoyed collecting antiques, especially old saws, cultivator seats and anything that reminded him of his growing up days. He especially enjoyed attending tractor shows with his best buddy, (adopted son) Roger Bailey, and tinkering with his 1946 B "Poppin" John Deere tractor.

James was a long-time member of First Baptist Church, Tulsa, and was a strong believer in prayer and trusting God to help him and his family.

James is survived by his two sons, J.O., and his wife, Debbie, of Montezuma; Tom, and his wife, Tonya, of Bixby; his sister, Margaret Fipps of Prattville, Okla.; and many nephews, nieces, cousins and friends.

James was preceded in death by his parents; his wife of 52 plus years, Marlene; brothers, Orval and Charley; sister, Carolyn Davis; an infant brother; and his stillborn twin daughters, Nora Faye and Grace Mae Parker.

A memorial service for James was held on Thursday, July 15, at Leonard and Marker Funeral Home in Bixby with burial following at Park Grove Cemetery in Broken Arrow.



PCCR 7-21-10