



Laurel Weldon Dowden

September 10, 1934 - February 4, 2025

Weldon was born to Franklin and Lucile Dowden on Sept 10. 1934 on a farm near Orrsburg in the Harmony community. He started school at Excelsior, a one room school, 2 miles from home. The teacher was Thelma Wilcox. His dad bought them a horse so that Weldon and his little sister Mary could ride Pee Wee the two miles to school. Weldon always liked to be with dad as he did the chores. After the 5th grade they sold their farm in Harmony Community and bought another farm in the Myrtle Tree Community. Myrtle tree was also a one-room school and the teacher was Mary McCurry. Weldon enjoyed school and MS McCurry was a very good teacher. At Myrtle tree they lived on a farm adjacent to Grandpa Jess Dowden. Together they farmed both farms along with Jess's brothers who also lived in the area. Saturday mornings Jess would call up to Franklins and tell Weldon that the Pancakes were going on the stove and he needed to come down and get his share. Dad loved to run down the hill and spend time with his grandpa. He loved being their Go Fer, his job was to follow them out to the fields run back and get items they needed to fix whatever it was that broke down. During the hay season it was his job to control the horse which was used to move the hay up into the barn. For this he would be paid with silver dollars. He was a dead shot with the hammer and many a rabbit fell victim to his accurate throws. Jess's place is now a boat ramp and campground for Lake Mozingo. The old car shed was the last to fall on the Dowden Place. After eighth grade he attended Maryville High school. His sophomore year, Franklin, bought him a 37 chevy and he took his sister

Mary and Bonnie Thorp to school. He was in FFA, played Basketball, Football, Participated in Track (High Jump and Broad Jump) and played Softball. He lettered in Football, Track and Basketball. He was elected senior class president and graduated in 1952 from Maryville High School. Bob Smith, Curly Wray and Kenny Wilhelm were all close friends of his and they kept this friendship going all their lives going on many vacations together. Weldon attended Northwest Missouri State Teachers College and majored in Chemistry and Mathematics graduating in 1956. He loved sports and lettered three years in Basketball and Track for the Bearcats and was a member of the Sigma Tau Fraternity. His nickname was Dinker Dowden as his classmates would holler "Sinker Dinker!" when he was on the basketball court. He was also elected to the student Senate. During his senior year he joined the Missouri National Guard and continued serving in the guard for 8 years reaching the rank of Sergeant finishing in the Armory at Pampa Texas. On June 1st 1956 he was joined in wedlock with Betty Louise Owens from Hopkins Missouri. After a brief honeymoon in the Ozarks they moved to Borger Texas where he went to work for Phillips Petroleum at the Copolymer plant. Borger was a shock to the couple as they were used to the lush farm fields of Northwest Missouri. Their first home was an apartment with dirt floors in the Phillips Camp at Buena Vista. Later they moved to better quarters and finally purchased a home in the Hughs Pit area of Borger. They developed strong friendships with several couples at the United Methodist Church which they have enjoyed to the present day. They had three children in Borger, Tom, Scott and Tanya. They lived in Borger until 1969 when Weldon was transferred to the Hoag fertilizer plant in Beatrice Nebraska. Mark was born into the family at this time. In 1972 they moved to Seabrook Texas, and he worked as the Training Director at Adams Terminal until 1976 when he was transferred to the Streamwood plant as Plant Manager. In 1979 he was made plant manager of the Carbon Black plant in Borger Texas. In 1981 he was promoted to Director of Safety for Phillips Petroleum Company and relocated to Bartlesville Oklahoma where he retired as Head of Corporate Safety. He

and Betty have lived the rest of their lives in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. He was an avid golfer and loved to watch the St Louis Cardinals play Baseball. He loved to watch the Cowboys and the Chiefs and would watch almost anything with a basketball. He passed peacefully Feb 4th with his wife by his side. He is survived by his beloved wife of 68 years, Betty Dowden. Children: Thomas and Terrye Dowden of Amarillo Texas, Scott and Laura Dowden of Maryville Missouri, Tanya and Mike Reece of Miami Oklahoma, Mark Dowden of Atlanta Georgia, 11 grandchildren and 7 Great Grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

Tribute Wall

MB

“ I watched Dinker Dowden play basketball for the Bearcats when I was in upper elementary and then junior high at Maryville. I knew that he had been an MHS Spoofhound and was a friend to my future wife's sisters. Dinker was a fan favorite because of his hustle on the court. If there was a loose ball, he'd get there before an opponent could pick it up. (--Marvin Bell, MHS 1961, NWMSU 1965 and 1970.)

MARVIN BELL - February 11, 2025 at 05:18 PM

TD

“ Dad had so many stories he shared over his life. To sum it all up he really enjoyed life and loved his family. He had a hard time saying it but we all knew it. They left friends everywhere they lived and kept in touch the best they could. He did really good for a farm kid from Northwest Missouri.

Tom Dowden - February 11, 2025 at 09:33 AM