

Former Shreveport mayor Bill Hanna dies at 86

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(Photo: File photo)

Former Shreveport Mayor Bill Hanna died Saturday at age 86.

Hanna was Shreveport's mayor from 1978 until 1982. He also served the public as Caddo Parish Administrator.

Hanna was born in Kansas City and moved to Shreveport with his family when he was three months old. He grew up in Shreveport and graduated from Byrd High School in 1947. An athlete, attended LSU and lettered on the baseball team from 1949-51. In 1951, he led the Tigers in hits and runs. After graduation, he played shortstop in minor league baseball before moving into the business world.

He joined his father, Bill Hanna Sr., in the automobile business at Bill Hanna Lincoln Mercury in the early 1950s. Later he operated Bill Hanna Ford in Shreveport.

Hanna moved into the public arena in 1978 when he was elected Shreveport's mayor. Unlike many Shreveport mayors of the past, Hanna was not serving in public office at the time he was elected.

Hanna became mayor at a time when Shreveport's charter changed. His legacy includes reorganizing city government and hiring all new city department directors.

On the business front, General Motors came to west Shreveport during his time as mayor.

In his work as Caddo Parish Administrator, he helped establish Government Plaza and solidified a tri-government settlement on disputed casino revenues. Also during his tenure, Chimp Haven opened its doors and a local cemetery for veterans was established. He also pushed for the rededication of tax dollars toward the juvenile justice system.

In a 2006 Times profile, Hanna said, "I wanted to make a difference. It has all been good experiences for me. I'm glad I did what I did, and I'm glad I am who I am."

Hanna is survived by his four daughters, Stephannie Chaffee, and husband Randy; Shelley Prothro; Dorothy Kristin Hanna, and husband Bruce Allen; Cynthia Morgan Hanna; and stepchildren Greg Deyo and Jeff Deyo; and wife Marvelle.

Funeral arrangements are pending.

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