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## Obituaries - Detail

# William R. 'Bill' Blackwell

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**BORN:** Thursday January 13, 1927

**DIED:** Monday August 22, 2011

### SERVICE

Saturday August 27, 2011  
10:30 AM  
Arapaho Road Baptist Church  
2256 Arapaho Road  
Garland, TX 75044

[Map](#)

### VISITATION

Saturday August 27, 2011  
10:00 AM to 10:30 AM  
Arapaho Road Baptist Church  
2256 Arapaho Road  
Garland, TX 75044

[Map](#)

W. R. "Bill" Blackwell, age 84 of Rowlett, Texas, went home to be with the Lord on Monday, August 22, 2011. He was born to the late Joseph Vernon Blackwell and wife, Katherine, on January 13, 1927, in Lockhart, Texas. Bill graduated from Lockhart High School in 1944, and enlisted in the US Navy where he served as an Aviation Electronics Technician until 1946 when he was honorably discharged. He married his high school sweetheart, Joyce Rheinlander, on February 8, 1948.

A combination of great athletic and intellectual abilities led Bill to pursue both a degree in Civil Engineering and a career in professional baseball with the St. Louis Cardinals' organization simultaneously. His determination and passion resulted in success in both the classroom and on the field. In 1955, he graduated with a degree in Civil Engineering from Texas A&M in College Station. He also excelled in municipal government, serving as City Manager in Freeport, Galveston, and Lubbock during the 1960s and 1970s. He received national recognition for his crisis preparedness and response management during Hurricane Carla, a category 5 storm which struck the Texas coast in September of 1961. He was also recognized for his outstanding leadership as he guided the City of Lubbock through the recovery after a massive tornado which devastated much of the city in May of 1970. He was later invited to return to Texas A&M to establish and teach a program in urban development and city management. He left Texas A&M as a tenured professor to manage a major engineering firm in Dallas. Then, at age 55, when most are considering their approaching retirement, Bill was seeking a new challenge. He established his own engineering firm, Blackwell & Associates from which he retired in 1989.

Over the years, Bill was a member of several professional and civic organizations including serving as President of the Texas City Managers Association and being a Paul Harris Fellow Rotarian. Bill's love for his family, this country, the great game of baseball, and the Texas Aggies were woven together with his accomplishments to define a life filled with love, joy and laughter.

Bill is survived by his wife of 63 years, Joyce, and their children: daughter, Diane Blackwell; daughter, Cheryl Spencer and husband, Randy; and son, David Blackwell and wife, Laure. As well as five grandchildren: Courtney Gould and husband, Ronnie; Matt Spencer and wife, Lindsey; Brianna Blackwell; Shayla Blackwell; and Reece Blackwell; two great-grandchildren: Caitlyn Gould and Addisyn Gould; and sister, Ada Gee of Early, TX.

Services will be held 10:30am Saturday, August 27, 2011, at Arapaho Road Baptist Church. A procession to the graveside service at Restland Memorial Park will immediately follow. Fellowship and refreshments will be provided back at the church after the interment (972-495-2223). Flowers may be sent to Rest Haven Funeral Home-Rowlett Chapel through Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup> or to the church on Saturday morning, August 27<sup>th</sup>.

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## Condolences

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09-01-2011

Our thoughts and prayers are with y'all. Love, Jillian & Bobby Houston (JT & Joys great-granddaughter)

Sent by: Jillian & Bobby Houston

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08-30-2011

Joyce and family --  
My sympathy and condolences in the loss of Bill -- an admired and appreciated colleague and friend. It was a privilege to have known him. I was distressed and saddened by the report. He'll be missed by so many, including me.

George R. Schrader  
Sent by: George R. Schrader

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08-26-2011

Aunt Joyce, David, Diane and Cheryl and family, I am so sorry for your loss. Uncle Bill meant the world to me. I remember visiting and going for a run with him. Of course I couldn't keep up, but he was patient with me. Those are the good times and will always be in my heart. By the way he was always my favorite great uncle. I know one day I will see him again. Psalm 100 is my favorite passage. I love all of you and wished I could be there. Melanie Dawn Blackwell Montoya

Sent by: Melanie Montoya

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08-25-2011

Joyce and family, Knowing you through Fred Burley, I remember Bill as being a very nice, considerate and thoughtful person. You will be in our prayers...

Fred is hospitalized now but I know his thoughts and prayers will be with you at this time. He will be saddened because he has lost a close friend. Pat

Sent by: PAT HADAWAY

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08-25-2011

So sorry for your loss. We met Mr. Blackwell at Pleasant Valley Rehab. He was such a joy and very kind to our mother. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Debra & Rina

Sent by: Rina Rucker / Debra Fouse

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08-24-2011

Joyce and family, I am a retired CM. While I never worked for or with Bill, I always knew I could call on him for support and advice. I considered him a friend and a mentor and a first class gentleman. He served his country and his fellow citizens. May be rest in peace. Denny Arnold

Sent by: Denny Arnold

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08-24-2011

Joyce and family,

We are saddened by Bill's passing, but we are so pleased to have known Bill, Joyce, and this terrific family. Bill did so much to help me and many others in our career. A tremendous role model! I will forever be grateful to him and to have worked with and for him. Our love and prayers, Larry

Sent by: Larry & Julie Cunningham

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08-24-2011

Joyce and Family, Our thoughts and prayers are with you as you complete the next few days. We pray that God will give you the strength you need. We send our love. Mack and Louise

Sent by: Mack and Louise Spencer

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