



Dr. Otis "Gene" Byrd, Jr.

December 20, 1943 - August 19, 2017

Celebrating the Life of  
Dr. Otis “Gene” Byrd, Jr.  
Tuesday, August 22, 2017 10:00 a.m.  
Calvary Baptist Church  
Beaumont, Texas  
Reverend Ralph Burrage  
Reverend Bill Morgan



*“I Will Rise”*  
John Griffin

Welcome

*“Rock of Ages”*  
*“It Is Well With My Soul”*  
John Griffin

Remembrances

*“No More Night”*  
John Griffin and Shari Griffin

Message

*“Amazing Grace”*  
Jerry Cash, Saxophonist

Dr. Otis “Gene” Byrd, Jr., 73, of Beaumont, passed away Saturday, August 19, 2017, surrounded by family at Christus St. Elizabeth Hospital in Beaumont, Texas. He was born on December 20, 1943, to Grace Wiltz and Otis Eugene Byrd, Sr. He was born one month premature at St. Mary’s Hospital in Port Arthur, but without complication and was a healthy baby boy. He was a delight to his mother and brought much joy to his family. He grew up attending Lakeview Methodist Church in Port Arthur and was active with the youth throughout his school years.

He graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School in 1962. Dr. Byrd continued his education by earning a Bachelor Degree in Mechanical Engineering from Lamar University in Beaumont. He later received his Masters in Mechanical Engineering from Rice University in Houston, and then a Doctorate of Engineering again from Lamar University in Beaumont. After receiving his Masters, he began his professional career working for companies such as Kellogg and Boeing in Houston, which afforded him the opportunity to work with NASA on special projects such as the Apollo program. After working with NASA, he moved to Austin, Texas and started work on his PhD. He eventually returned to Beaumont to spend more time with his family and continued his education and graduated with his Doctorate degree from Lamar University Beaumont. Soon after graduation, he was offered a position as an adjunct professor with LU until he accepted a full-time position with Lamar State College, Port Arthur. Always longing to add to his education, he travelled to A&M University in College Station, Texas three summers in a row and added 18 hours of graduate level classes to his resume in physics so he could teach Physics at Lamar State College, Port Arthur. He truly found his calling at Lamar State College. He loved teaching and working with students to increase their education. He had a great rapport with his colleagues and was very loved by his students.

It was at Lamar State College Port Arthur where he met his beloved wife, Sally. He often regaled family and friends with stories of how he met Sally and knew right away she was the one for him. Gene courted her and tried everything possible to get her attention. It wasn’t until he found himself engrossed in a conversation with her regarding a book she planned to teach her class that semester that he began to become a viable suitor. She mentioned the book The Prince of Tides and she was sure that he had not read it. As she asked him questions regarding pertinent parts of the book and he began to discuss the answers and his favorite

parts, they became friends. The year that would follow would be filled with dates, lots of laughter and the joy of Sally's family getting to know Dr. Byrd. He finally got up the courage to ask Sally to marry him and she of course agreed. The next seventeen years would bring friendships, grandchildren, great grandchildren, lots of joy and celebrations. Gene and Sally joined Gateway Baptist church and quickly became fully involved in all aspects of the church. Gene loved Jesus and showed his love through his actions and behavior. He was one of the most selfless and loving people you could meet and he never met a stranger. In 2012 Gene and Sally moved from Port Arthur, Texas to Beaumont, Texas and joined Calvary Baptist Church on Dowlen Road. Dr. Byrd soon joined the orchestra, where he honed his skills playing the saxophone. He also joined the children's ministry where he volunteered and taught first and second grade Sunday school with Sally and his son, Jim and wonderful daughter in law, Tangee. Dr. Byrd became the glue that held his family together. He was the sounding board for all important decisions and the joy of all the grandchildren. Everyone that knew Dr. Byrd was blessed by the joy that he brought to every endeavor.

He is survived by his wife, Sally Byrd; four children, Katie Marteney of Waco; Jenny Goff and her husband, Jeff, of Beaumont; Jim Griffin and his wife, Tangee, of Beaumont; and Richard Griffin and his wife, Heather, of Spring; ten grandchildren, Lauren, Mason and Jack Marteney; Sarah Morgan and her husband, Heath, Hannah and Abby Goff; Emma Griffin, Olivia Hornsby, and Lawson Griffin; and Peirce Griffin; two great-grandchildren, Beka and Patric Morgan; sister, Susan LeBlanc and her husband, John; their children, Kathleen LeBlanc-Hood and her husband, Al and Allison Williams and her husband, Joseph; and cousin, Lu Whitaker of Frankfort, Indiana.

Dr. Byrd was preceded in death by his parents.

As his family remembers, Papa Byrd would often say at the closing of every prayer, "Dear Lord, thank you for our big wonderful family." Dr. Byrd was a complete blessing to everyone he met and continues to live on in our hearts and minds.



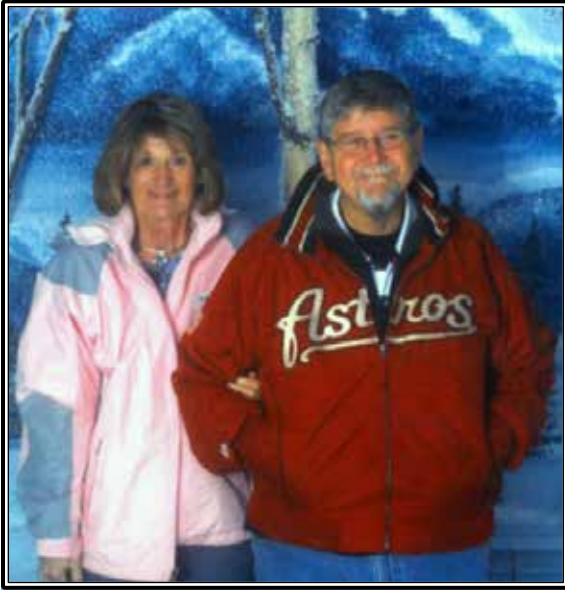














**Pallbearers**

Jim Griffin

Richard Griffin

Mason Marteney

Jack Marteney

Aaron Covington

Jeff Goff

**Graveside Service**

Tuesday, August 22, 2017 3:00 p.m.

Greenlawn Memorial Park

3900 Twin City Highway

Groves, Texas



Please sign Dr. Byrd's guest book and share your memories at  
[www.broussards1889.com](http://www.broussards1889.com)