



Darrell Wayne Harrison

August 2, 1936 - September 28, 2020

Darrell Wayne Harrison, former Director of the Roper Mountain Science Center, passed away September 28, 2020, at his home in Travelers Rest. He was born in Wayne County, Illinois, on August 2, 1936, the youngest of five children of Vern and Ruby Harrison of Fairfield, Illinois.

After graduating from high school, when his father asked what he intended to do next, he followed in his older brother's footsteps and enlisted in the U.S. Air Force at St. Louis in November 1954. He served as a flight crew radio operator in the Military Air Transport Service and flew missions out of Maine, Guam and Japan. Upon his discharge in 1958 he used his G.I. Bill to attend Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois. At SIU he earned bachelor's and master's degrees in design – and met his future wife Georgia. Their two sons, Paul, and Birch were born in Carbondale. The family lived on a small farm with a menagerie of animals. Darrell worked as a curator and then interim Director of the University Museum until 1978, when the family moved to Charlotte where he ran the Children's Nature Museum and worked on the Discovery Place project.

In 1983, he was hired as the Director, to give life to the concept that would become the Roper Mountain Science Center. The family moved to Travelers Rest. Working with an incredibly dedicated staff and visionary community partners, the Science Center came to life step by step – adding educational buildings, a planetarium, an observatory, and Living History Farm over the course of his two plus decades as director.

In retirement, he perfected his wood working skills, using his rebuilt lathe to create bowls and other wood products that were treasured gifts of family and friends. On the board of the Soil & Water Conservation District from 2006 to 2014, he used his water quality monitoring trips in the mountains as an excuse to fly fish whenever possible. Darrell Harrison was a beloved husband, father, grandfather and friend. He will be sorely missed. He is survived by his wife and their sons and families: Paul and Liz Harrison, daughter Zia and sons Asher and Ian; and Birch and Lynne Harrison and daughters Sarah, Caroline and Anna. He is also survived by an extended family of nephews and nieces, as well as his brother-in-law Charles "Bud" Butler.

Online condolences may be expressed to the family at <http://www.thehowzemortuary.com>
The Howze Mortuary, Travelers Rest, is in charge of arrangements. (864) 834-8051

Comments



“ Darrell’s legacy in Greenville County will certainly lie in the field of education as he made such an excellent director of the Roper Mountain Science Center. He was also a wonderful commissioner for the Greenville County Soul & Water Conservation District. I was so honored to work for him in this capacity. He often shared stories about his children and devotion for Georgia . My sympathies to you all. My thankfulness first having known him.

Becky Wooten
Greenville SC

Becky Wooten - October 10, 2020 at 10:18 PM



“ Georgia and Family,

Debbie and I were so sorry to hear about Darrell.

It is so sad that with the current situation we can not all get together to share this loss in sympathy and respect for you and Darrell.

Let's hope that our whole GUUF family can be together before too long. We have enjoyed knowing you both. And we hope to be able to express our condolences to you in person !

- Ernie and Debbie Glenn

Ernie Glenn - October 07, 2020 at 09:56 PM



“ Please accept my sincere condolences. I had the pleasure of knowing your family when Birch was in my class at Northwest Middle School. What a wonderful legacy he left for countless students and educators at Roper Mountain Science Center! I pray that God will comfort you in your loss and that the love of family and friends and will ease your sorrow.

Teresa Blankenship

Teresa C Blankenship - October 06, 2020 at 08:50 AM



“ Georgia,

Darrell was so kind and gentle, such a pleasure know. We will remember him with warmth and gratitude as a friend. Our hearts go out to you and your family. We hope that the love and respect that our community has had for Darrell for many years will be a comfort to all of you. Diana and Roger Miel

Diana Miel - October 02, 2020 at 04:59 PM



“ Dicky, Kathy, Eli, Aubrey & Tyler purchased the Sweet Tranquility Basket for the family of Darrell Wayne Harrison.



Dicky, Kathy, Eli, Aubrey & Tyler - October 01, 2020 at 09:18 PM



“ Georgia, Paul, Birch and family: It was with such a heavy heart we heard of Darrell's passing Monday. Our hearts go out to you all as you grieve the loss of this very good-hearted man who always had a smile for everyone. We've lived just across the private drive for 30 years and could never have asked for better neighbors. Please call on us if there is ever anything you need. Our love and sympathy always,

Dicky, Kathy, Eli, Aubrey & Tyler

Kathy Walker - October 01, 2020 at 09:10 PM



“ I had the honor of working with Darrell during our careers with Greenville County Schools. He had a positive impact on everyone who had the privilege of meeting him. I will always remember his hugh smile and quick wit. I pray that God's grace will bring you comfort.

Oby Lyles - October 01, 2020 at 03:05 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Darrell Wayne Harrison.



October 01, 2020 at 01:02 PM



“ We are so sorry to hear of Darrell's passing. Georgia, you and your family, are in our thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. We hope you find peace and love in the memories you cherish.

With deepest sympathy,

Your friends at the Peace Center

Peace Center - October 01, 2020 at 09:49 AM



“ I had the pleasure of knowing Darrell through the Greenville School District. He was a kind, happy, and special person. Prayers go out to you.

Shirley Mayer - October 01, 2020 at 08:42 AM



“ Georgia and Family - My heart goes out to you during this difficult time. Darrell was one of the nicest men I have ever known. He always had a smile, a hug or a kind word to share. I will treasure forever the beautiful walnut bowl he made for me. He will be sorely missed by many at the Greenville Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.
Kathy Knox

Kathy Knox - September 30, 2020 at 07:44 PM



“ Working with Darrell was a huge part of who I became as a Science Educator. Darrell touched so many with his respect of them in decisions making the Science Center run like a well oiled machine. I am sorry for your loss of a humorous, kind, fair, smart and dedicated man who touched many lives. Georgia and a Family, you are in our hearts.
Sincerely, Rex Smith

Rex Smith - September 30, 2020 at 06:42 PM



“ I am so sorry to hear of the loss of Darrell. I had the pleasure of working with him on the Roper Mountain Board and through the Greenville County Medical Alliance. He was devoted to educating the school children and to science. I always enjoyed seeing him and will greatly miss him. My condolences to Georgia and his family.
Susan Robbins

Susan Robbins - September 30, 2020 at 05:48 PM



“ Georgia, I am so sorry for the loss of your beloved husband. You are in my thoughts and prayers.

Helen Levesque - September 30, 2020 at 02:08 PM



“ Georgia,

Sarah and I wanted to let you know we were thinking about you and praying for you and your family during this time. You and Darrell were very special to me and I will always hold him in a special place in my heart. Love you both!

Lee Hegwood

Lee Hegwood - September 30, 2020 at 10:13 AM



“ Bud Butler, Steve, Jim, Karen and families. purchased the Rays of Light Spray for the family of Darrell Wayne Harrison.



Bud Butler, Steve, Jim, Karen and families. - September 29, 2020 at 08:37 PM



“ Georgia, Paul & Birch ,
We are so sorry to learn of Darrell's passing. Always a wonderful, thoughtful man.
Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Bob & Debbie Sayers

Robert Sayers - September 29, 2020 at 07:50 PM



“ Our hearts go out to Georgia and the Harrison family as they grieve the loss of their dearly loved Darrell.
During the past several years, we have enjoyed many good times with Georgia and Darrell. He was a genuinely good man and a pleasure to be with. We will miss him and always remember him with great fondness.
Georgia, we will be here for you as our journeys continue.
Jack Dempsey and Liz McGrory

Liz McGrory & Jack Dempsey - September 30, 2020 at 07:13 PM



“ Darrell was the leader when I was a school guide on the living history farm in the 1990's. He was an exceptional person and I privileged to be there at that time. My husband passed 21 months ago so I truly have sympathy.

priscilla smith - October 06, 2020 at 03:19 PM