



Hardy Herman Huntley

FEB 7, 1936 - MAY 25, 2013



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Sometimes you are lucky enough to know someone who is larger than life. Legendary Wagon Wheel Flea Market owner, Hardy H. Huntley, passed away peacefully on May 25, 2013, surrounded by his children. From humble beginnings, Hardy was born in North Carolina, raised by his preacher father and mother, with his five sisters. Hardy's entrepreneurial spirit began at an early age. As a youth, he sold candy to his friends, ran several produce stands, and broke in wild horses. When Hardy moved to Florida, he opened a successful car hop restaurant where he met his wife, Janet. He also owned a mowing - tractor business and a car lot. After having purchased land on Park Boulevard, Hardy began selling used items on the roadside and was soon joined by others. He began renting spaces for a small fee and it grew to become one of the largest flea markets in the United States, the now famous Wagon Wheel Flea Market. He continued with the Gunn Highway Flea Market, Mustang Flea Market, Pinellas County Fair, Florida Fall Festival, Chili Cook-offs, and several restaurants. Hardy was involved in politics and hosted fundraisers for former Florida governor Jeb Bush and former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani. He was also honored countless times for his leadership and many contributions to his community. Finally, there was nothing Hardy loved more than the "thrill of the deal" which led to his ventures into real estate. If you knew Hardy, you knew the zest he had for life. As a young adult he did stock car racing. For a while, he was the only person in Pinellas County to own buffalo. Once, for the opening of the Pinellas County Fair Hardy dressed up as Elvis and bungee jumped! He loved working, driving his tractor, dancing and his family. Hardy is preceded in death by his wife, Janet. He is survived by his children Deborah Huntley, Dawn Huntley Mattox and husband Christopher, David Huntley and wife Cindy, Misty Lynch, Jacob Huntley, and grandchildren Isaac, Lauren, Noah, and Jaxon, and sisters Esterleen Suddarth and Virginia Whitner.



Tribute Wall

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DG

Dianna Gear posted:

I am so incredibly sad to hear your dad passed. I used to set up there. At the end of the sale, he always walked every row in the market. He always said hi to me, smiled. A little conversation. Who does that anymore. Always polite. Always nicely dressed. No t-shirts. Holey jeans. Nice man. Treated everyone with respect. One of a kind. His kids were polite and also respectful. I met someone you. Sad day. 77 is young. I'm very sad to hear.

September 28 at 1:08 PM

SP

Sherry Potempa posted:

I will truly miss dancing with Hardy and his cheerful disposition and ready smile! Rest in peace, my friend!

May 31 at 3:54 PM

SC

Sharon Coil posted:

Dear Huntley Children, I just heard about your father's funeral. I'm sorry I missed the opportunity to attend and give you a hug. You are in my thoughts and prayers. Mrs. Coil (Sharon)

May 30 at 12:06 PM

TG

Terri Grittani posted:

I have known Hardy for about 25 years. He has always been a gentleman and uplifting to be around. I saw him just a little over a month ago and even though his looks have changed his "chuckle" never did. I will miss knowing that I can bump into him at anytime and know I have a friend to talk with.

May 29 at 5:24 PM

GG

G. Patricia & George Greer posted:

george & I met Hardy & Janet back in 1983/84 when george ran for the county commission. Janet looked like a little doll and Hardy's face always reflected his hard work ethic...Janet sharing stories of Hardy cooking inside the restaurant while she served food on roller skates ...they were dating back then & she would give him half (I think) of her tips as they saved for their future. We all remember watching Jacob grow up on Wagon Wheel TV ads & observing the family camaraderie at the Treasure Island beach parties. We'll never forgot their wonderful support and kind friendship. Sincerely, pat & george greer

May 28 at 8:00 PM



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NS

Norman Scoggins posted:

I have known Hardy since grade school in North Carolina. Once he finished his time in the service and moved to Florida, he came home one year for Christmas. When he got ready to return to Florida, I loaded up and went with him. We owned a car lot together, raced cars together, and worked together with the Flea Market. We also met our wives and started our families right down the street from each other in Pinellas Park. Hardy and Jan's four older children were in the same age range as our three children. We spent a lot of time together as families including spending many fun week-ends at the property in Weeki Wachee. Even after my family and I moved to Chiefland in 1970, we still spent week-ends at each other's homes. We have many, many memories of good times spent together with Hardy and Jan and the kids. As usually happens, with the distance and the busy lives we all lead, we didn't spend as much time together in recent years as we did when we lived in Pinellas Park. We want to send our thoughts and prayers to all Hardy and Jan's children and family because we know you have experienced two great losses in the last few years. May God bless and keep you in his capable hands. The Scoggins family Norman and Anita, Victor (Tammi and kids), Teresa (Brout and Heather), Pamela (John and kids) Chiefland, Florida

May 28 at 12:55 PM

DD

Debbie Rollins Dobbins posted:

As a young girl when Hardy brought Jan home to meet the family. I recall being so excited, that my Aunt Sallie planning a household shower. I was one proud little girl to have a gift for this couple. Dishcloths, and towels. Years passed, and we all enjoyed visits from Hardy, and Jan. I learned of them naming their first daughter Debbie!! I was so very proud, thinking of us having the same name!! My heart shares your loss, although we didn't spend quality time together over the years. I love all my family members. I pray for your strength, comfort, and peace in the days ahead. May God wrap His arms around you with love, and guidance. God Bless

May 28 at 6:52 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Hardy by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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