



## Bobby Lee Smith

August 12, 1929 - January 7, 2024

Bobby Lee Smith was born on August 12th, 1929, to parents Tommy and Nova Smith in Wynnewood, Oklahoma, where he would reside for his 94 years. He attended Wynnewood public schools, where he was classmates with his childhood best friend and future wife, Beulah Mae Gates. He was a Wynnewood savage at heart, having played baseball, basketball, and football while in school. Upon graduation, at 17 years old, he was hired at the Wynnewood refinery, formerly known as the Kerr McGee Refinery, as an electrical instrumentation specialist. He continued working there for 41 years and learned everything he could about the refinery. In his service at the refinery, his colleagues recognized him as a vital part of the refinery's daily operations. When he retired in 1988, he was greatly missed. He married the love of his life, Beulah Mae, on August 1st, 1949. The pair met when they were five years old as neighbors east of Wynnewood. Bob tells the story of the two working out in the fields together. Witnesses to their great love story say that after they met, they

could always be seen together. They had two children together, Carylon and Bobby Joe. Bob and Beulah were married for 62 wonderful years, a testament to their commitment to each other. Bob's love and devotion to his wife was unprecedented. Nothing exemplified this more than his sole care for her as she battled Alzheimer's for the better part of 10 years. Bob was a man of many talents and hobbies. He had a particular talent for fixing and building all things. He could make almost anything from what he had lying around the house. He was incredibly intelligent and could figure out how everything worked, which undoubtedly contributed to his impressive career at the refinery, where his peers called him a genius. Perhaps the most prominent hobby he had was calf roping. Much like the refinery, his roping career started with humble beginnings. As a child, his job was tending to the family mules. This is where his passion and knowledge of training began. Transitioning to training calf roping horses came naturally due to his time spent with mules. From a young age, he mastered the art of communication with any animal, from coon dogs to roping horses. He recalled coon hunting all night to make it home in time for breakfast and to leave for work. His love for calf roping specifically festered from the Wynnewood Roundup Club. He was a founding member of the club years before he became a contestant. His devotion to his job and family made time for

hobbies scarce. In his spare time, he started to learn about roping; he built a roping arena in his backyard and slowly began to master the art. After his retirement, his attention turned marginally to roping. This is when he would train many great horses and ultimately decide to start competing on them, joining the Senior Professional Rodeo Association (SPRA), where he was a fierce competitor. He won many SPRA titles on his trusty mount, Lucky. He was always working on training and selling the next best horse. When his wife was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, he decided to retire from competing. But as any cowboy knows, when you have an arena, the traffic of ropers never slows. He had decided to stay home with his wife but found a passion in helping other young ropers. Some of his first students included Jackie Butts and Tony Graves, who relied on Bob's expertise with their horses and had tremendous admiration for him. Following his peers' suit, Tim Tate caught wind of the great horseman who could "whisper in horse's ears" and make them great. Bob had a soft spot for the young roper who shared a kindred spirit. Tim says perhaps Bob took Tim under his wing because "no one needed as much help as I did." From this, a lifelong friendship was born between two cowboys who loved good horses and going to rodeos. Through that relationship, Bob impacted the lives of countless young ropers, many of whom are with us today.

First and foremost, Bob was a family man. His priority was always his wife and kids; he never hesitated to put his wants and needs on hold for his children. He had a close relationship with his son, Bobby Joe, which was founded on their love for the outdoors. As Bobby Joe grew up, they found a shared passion for gunsmithing and mechanics. They worked side by side at the refinery, strengthening their relationship. Even so, Bob was committed to his relationship with his son and was determined to build a bond with him no matter what he was interested in. His relationship with his daughter Carylon was no different. Bob was a staple in her life even though she spent most of her life in the city. Their relationship grew into an inseparable bond after the passing of her mom, Beulah, and Brother Bobby Joe. She selflessly gave up all her weekends to be with her dad, videoing calf roping runs in the practice pens, going to rodeos, and being a constant sidekick to her dad. When his health started to decline, Carylon assumed all responsibility relating to her dad, and he was immensely grateful to her. Her husband, John, filled the gaps in her presence at the farm and helped care for his father-in-law. Every day, he lived as an example to his children of a devout Christian and loving partner; those traits are mirrored in his children, who have abundant love for their family. In his later years, he enjoyed caring for all his horses: Maggie, Roxy, and Barney. Dogs: Sadie,

Maddie, and Red. Cats: pepper and smoke. His calves, his beloved rooster Henry, and the wild turkeys that lived near his place. He was a wonderful father and considered spending time trail riding with his daughter Carylon and son-in-law John a great joy. He joined his wife, Beulah, in heaven on January 7th, 2024, peacefully in the comfort of his own home, surrounded by his loved ones. He is preceded in death by his wife, Beulah Mae Smith; Son, Bobby Joe Smith; Brother, Raymond Smith; Sisters, Helen Sweetman, Fay Smith, and Shirley Odom. He is survived by his daughter, Carylon Medaris; her husband, John Medaris; their children, Miles Medaris and Olivia Brunner; his granddaughter, Samantha Smith; and two sisters, June Campbell and JoAnn Griffin.

Services will be held Thursday, January 11th at 1PM at the DeArman Funeral Home Chapel with interment following at the Oaklawn Cemetery in Wynnewood, OK.

Services are under the direction of the DeArman Funeral Home of Wynnewood.

# Cemetery Details

## Oaklawn Cemetery

Wynnewood  
Wynnewood, OK 73098

# Events

**Details are pending.**

# Tribute Wall

JG

“ *Jo Ann Griffin lit a candle in memory of Bobby Lee Smith*



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**Jo Ann Griffin** - January 11, 2024 at 12:15 AM

JC

“ *June & Becky Campbell lit a candle in memory of Bobby Lee Smith*



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**June & Becky Campbell** - January 11, 2024 at 12:13 AM