



Robert Gerald Smith

March 10, 1946 - December 31, 2016

Obituary of Robert Smith

Dr. R. Jerry Smith, 70, of Leesburg, Florida passed away December 31, 2016. Born in Orlando, Florida on March 10, 1946 to Woodrow M. and Lula Cross Smith, Dr. Smith was a native Floridian and attended public schools in west Orange County. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from Georgia Southern University in 1968 and his Masters in Education from Rollins College in Winter Park, FL in 1972. He taught in the Lake County public school system in various capacities from 1968 to 1978 and then moved to Lake-Sumter Community College, now Lake-Sumter State College from 1978 to 1996. During this time he served the college as VP Institutional Advancement and Student Services, Dean of Educational Services, Executive Director LSCC Foundation, Inc., Associate Dean of Extended Studies and Director of Admissions/Records/Recruitment. Additionally, he continued his education completing a Specialist in Education Degree from Florida Atlantic University in 1985 and Doctor of Education from the University of Central Florida in 1989. In 1996, Dr. Smith was elected the Superintendent of the Lake County School District where he served until his retirement in 2001. He had a love for education and continued to work with school districts and their curriculum until his death.

Dr. Smith's faith and family defined him as a person. A dedicated member of the First United Methodist Church in Tavares, he served the church and its members faithfully for many years. He is survived by his wife Patricia, whom he married September 8, 1967; son Christopher and his wife Sonjas Smith and their sons Aidan and Gavin; brother Stan and wife Katie Smith; brother Doug and wife Diana Smith; sister Jan and husband Don Trawick; sister Carol and husband Denny Swain; as well as numerous cousins, nieces, nephews and other extended family. He was preceded in death by a brother and sister in law, Bill and Deloris Smith.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held on Saturday January 7, 2017 beginning at 2 PM at the First United Methodist Church of Tavares, 600 W. lanthe St., Tavares, FL 32778 with Pastor Mike Briggs presiding. In lieu of flowers, the family request donations be made to the Children's Ministry of First United Methodist Church of Tavares.

Tribute Wall

SS

“ Dear Patti and family: I saw this notice when looking for another. I am so sorry to hear of your loss. Jerry was my middle school Florida Civic's teacher at Carver. It was a mandatory topic to learn that year. It was so cool to have a teacher as young and "hip" as he was. It was 1969. I was in his class when I was called out and made aware of my brother's death in Vietnam that October day. It was memorable for me and I'll never forget your husband or those times. You and he would come into the Furniture Barn often to look around and I so enjoyed visiting with you over the years as friends. You will be in my prayers. Blessings...

Susie Norton Sapp - January 18, 2017 at 12:00 AM

SM

“ Patty, I am so sorry to hear of Jerry's death. Roddy's mother saw the obituary in her newspaper and showed it to Roddy but it was already after the funeral. And then Roddy showed it to me. I wanted to send you a card, but don't know your address. Please know you have my deep sympathy, and the rest of your family too. I am so sorry for your grief. Sincerely, Sheila Michele (Witt)

Sheila Michele - January 16, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RS

“ The Faculty and Staff of UCF College of Education & Human Performance express their deepest condolences and sympathy on the loss of Dr. Jerry Smith.

Richard Sloane - January 11, 2017 at 12:00 AM

CJ

“Patty (and extended family), I am sadden to learn of the passing of your beloved husband Jerry. Patty- you were my kindergarten teacher way back in the day 1969 at Fruitland Park Elementary School. In 1983 we were reunited while working at Lake Sq. Mall. What a wonderful reunion! I also got to reconnect with you and Jerry thru you Mom & Dad (as they were members at Silver Lake). I remember reaching out to Jerry with regards to a photo album of us kids at the old Howard Johnsons (now Ramshackles) in Leesburg. Jerry was so kind to give me his undivided attention over the phone and encouraged me to keep up with you both thru FBook.. We will miss his smile and know you miss the love of your life. "KNOW THAT LOVE KNOWS NOT OF ITS OWN DEPTH UNTIL THE HOUR OF SEPARATION: Hugs from afar... Raleigh NC.

Chrissie Jaje - January 08, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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###GESTURE###

Chrissie Jaje - January 08, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RC

“ Jerry was an amazing man who provided counsel, support and inspiration. I am blessed to have known him. Patty, my prayers to you and the family and to all his friends/colleagues.
###GESTURE###

Rhetta Cumberland - January 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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Rhetta Cumberland - January 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MB

“ Jerry was my mentor, leader, and friend. I always marveled at his ability to turn any situation into a positive and productive experience, and felt privileged to have worked with him when he was Superintendent of Schools In Lake School District. He will be missed by so many as he touched the lives of children, teachers and instructional leaders all over the state of Florida. Patty, I will keep you and your family in my prayers. May God give you peace and strength.

Maureen Backenstoss - January 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MH

“ Patti, we are so sorry to hear of Jerry's passing. May God bless you and your family. May you feel His comforting arms of love and peace around you. It has been a long time since we were neighbors and we moved away. It would be nice to catch up on all those years. Love and prayers, Maggie & Frank

Maggie and Frank Haywood - January 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

LG

“ Terribly sorry to hear of Jerry's passing. Only knew him in high school. But.....he was one terrific guy! So kind-hearted and friendly. I'm saying prayers for peace and consolation for his family.

Lynn Nielsen Grant - January 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

SM

“ I am so sorry to hear of Jerry's passing. I will always remember him as a kind, gentle, man who always had a smile on his face when he greeted you with a , "How are you?" He loved education and always wanted the best for children. He was very good to my family and I will always be grateful for his kindness and concern. My thoughts and prayers go out to Patty and the rest of his family. My sincere condolences, Shirley

Shirley Colvard Mattina - January 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TF

“ Jerry was probably the nicest,most considerate person you could have ever met. He made you feel like you had known him for years! I had the privilege of knowing him for only a short time but I knew immediately that he loved people and put 100% in to all he believed in. He was such a blessing to our family personally. We will miss him dearly.

The Meyer Family - January 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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The Meyer Family - January 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RR

“ Save a seat in the front row for all of us, Jerry Lee. Keep Dr. Sis and Dr. Paul close so that we can sing Amazing Grace together again. We are already missing you so very much. We love you and pray for Our Lord to bless you with all there is up there.
###GESTURE###

Rita Rosenquist - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RB

“ Patti and Chris, so sorry to hear of Jerry's passing. Know that my thoughts and prayers are with you and your family at this most difficult time.

Rita Hardy Byrne - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ Dear Smith Family, I worked with Jerry at Lake Sumter from 1988 to 1996 when he became Superintendent. Jerry helped me in many ways in the early part of my career. He both encouraged me to be the best I could be and challenged me to strive in leadership. Also being a cat lover, we talked and laughed about his cat Sylvester and my cat War. I am so sorry to hear of his passing. He will be missed.

Melissa Throckmorton Stephan - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TC

“ My heart felt symthony to Jerry's family. May God be with you all. Rest in peace Jerry.

Tanis King Cook - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

BD

“ My deepest sympathy to all the Smith family. Jerry and I grew up together and I have fond memories of him as a little boy. Praying for you with love.

Barbara Davis - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

AS

“ I am so sorry about the loss of your brother Jerry. I only knew him as a young boy growing up in Oakland, Fl. but considered the Smiths a second home back then and loved the whole family. I would loved to have know Jerry as a man, it seems that he was a wonderful Christian man full of life and with a passionate concern for others. I will keep your family in my heart and prayers during this time of sadness and joy. Avis T. Scott

Avis Thompson Scott - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RR

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Rita Rosenquist - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

CC

“ Dear Smith Family, Jerry was a gentile giving person who made sure everyone felt welcome at any convivial occasion. That talent was God given because I never heard him say an unkind word about another. "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." *Philippians. 2:3-4.* Jerry's life of service is certainly a wonderful testimony to the scripture above. Our prayers and condolences go out to the Smith Family.

Coach Joe and June Clenney - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

VS

“ May God's embrace fill you, Ms. Patty, and your family with peace, love and His presence! We love Mr. Jerry- he will be missed! Much love, Virginia and family AND Leo and Estelle Walker

Virginia Walker Scuderi - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

GS

“ To all of the Smith family. I am so sorry to hear of Jerry's death. It has been a long time but I remember all of you. Your Mother had wonderful children. I really enjoyed living close to all of you growing up. Jerry was a good Son, Brother, Husband, Father, and Uncle. I can't be with you guys but my heart will be. May the Lord give all of you "PEACE THAT PASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING". Glenda Shofner

Glenda Shofner - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

BV

“ Jan: our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. Love to know about your brother. He was a great fellow and wish we could have known him. Bless you all!

Bill & Vi - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RR

“ We were sadden to hear of Jerry's home going in that we would not be able to enjoy him here but are encouraged by the fact that we will see him again in Glory. Prayers for peace for his family. He will be missed.

Ron & Casey Reams - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KG

“ My thoughts and prayers for all of hi s family and friends. God bless.

Koren grant - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with all of Jerry's loved ones at this time. Jerry was a special kind person, a wonderful family man, a friend to all, a leader and educator who will be missed by all who were touched by his being among us. He will be greatly missed. Blessings and prayers, Jane and Steve

Jane and Steve Sanford - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

PB

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

Patsy and Sonny Bell - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

PS

“ Uncle Jerry loved his family, he always made everyone feel good. Best of all he Loved the FLORIDA GATORS, just like me his favorite niece. You will be missed!! Love always Pam

Pam Smith - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ I am truly sorry to hear of the passing of Jerry Smith. I did not know him that well, but he served his senior class well.

Jeri Campana - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

LS

“ I am so sad and send my love to family and friends. The world lost a wonderful and gentle soul.

Lynda Hull Sossamon - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ Robert Gerald Smith

Jean Quigley Becker - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RO

“ Lake County lost another community leader who was committed to education and our students. It was a please to work with Jerry. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. We will not be able to attend the service as we are out of town.

Russell & Margo Odom - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TF

“ Robert Gerald Smith

The Shufelt Family - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MA

“ a terrific man! Jerry was my colleague at LSCC in '93-'95. We served on the Kellogg Leadership Commission and drove together to Gainesville for a meeting. We not only enjoyed an excellent grouper meal on that trip, we laughed when we stopped in Two Egg, FL, on the way home, to take pics of each other standing next to the community sign. I lost touch with Jerry after I left LSCC in 1995, but I've always remembered him as an outstanding educator and true gentlemen! My condolences to his family...he will indeed be missed!

Mike Agron - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JK

“ *Patty, our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.*

Jean & Frank Kaminski - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

PP

“ *Robert Gerald Smith*

Pam Post - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

PP

“ *Jerry will be greatly missed by the children at FUMC of Tavares. Thank you Jerry for touching the lives of so many of our children at church and at JAM. You are an inspiration and have left a legacy that will never be forgotten. May God wrap his loving arms around Patty, Chris, and the entire Smith family.*

Pam Post - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

BO

“ *Patty and family, I was so sadden to see Jerry's obit today. He was a wonderful man who will be missed. Jerry put his family and community first and was an inspiration and role model to many. I will miss his warm personality and great sense of humor. Please accept our sincere condolences. Bev and David Ohnstad*

Bev Ohnstad - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DK

“ *You and your entire family are in our thoughts and prayers, Patty. Jerry seemed to be the breath of life itself! Whether he and David were on the campaign trail together, or whether our paths crossed serving our Lake County students, Jerry always had an energy bigger than life and a love of children like no other. "It can't be done" just didn't exist in his vocabulary. He never uttered a word of discouragement, but always listened, always smiled, and always turned possibilities into adventures and achievements. He will be sorely missed, but I know that he is blessed this day in the arms of his Holy Father, and prepares his family's heavenly home for them when their time comes to see the Face of Jesus. Love to all.*

David and Cherie Knowles - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ *Robert Gerald Smith*

jim bridgewater - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ *mr.smith was assistant principle at tavares high school during my junior and senior years.he instilled pride in our school and was a popular administrator with students and faculty.i kept in touch with him in the years after i graduated and supported him in his runs for public office as a member of the school board as well as lake county schools superintendent.jerry always had a smile on his face and felt blessed.thats because he blessed so many who knew him.i had seen and spoken with him several times in recent years he still called me hilda my stage name in a male impersonating females contest the high school put on called the mess tavares pagent.he told me when we contacted me on facebook i was one of his favorite students and i let him know that i and all the student body at THS loved and respected him.my condolences to his wonderful wife his children,siblings other family and friends.you will be missed mr.smith!RIP.....LOVE, HILDA*

jim bridgewater - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KV

“ *Dear Smith Family: NYE heaven receive another angel when Jerry passed. It was a honor to call him a friend. He will be missed. Kay Visconti*

Kay Visconti - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

CW

“ *I am so saddened to learn of Jerry's passing. Jerry was my mentor and friend at Lake Sumter JC. I have not seen Jerry and Patty in many years but my feeling of friendship is as strong as ever. My condolences to Patty and the entire family. God Bless Jerry!*

Charles Wagner - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

LL

“ I remember him fondly from Middle school. He was always so helpful to us in whatever club & or shenanigans we were involved in .Truly a great man and friend to all. He will be remembered in my prayers. With Sympathy, Lisa Rich Libby Class of 79

Lisa Rich Libby - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TH

“ We were saddened to hear the news about Jerry. Our thoughts and prayers are with Patty and the rest of the family. May memories be the wings that carry you at this time. We will certainly remember Jerry and all the antics and good times back in the Carver Middle School days.

Tom Harris - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

LS

“ Robert Gerald Smith

L. Pierce Standridge - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MM

“ I am undone. I thought Jerry would go on forever. I will always miss his beautiful smile and laugh. He has made me laugh so many times over the years. I am sorry that our lives drifted apart over the years. I can still see him practically running from meeting to meeting or event to event out at Lake-Sumter. My thoughts and prayers are with all of his family and many, many friends.

Mary Montez - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

PH

“ I am deeply saddened by the news of your loss. Dr. Smith was a great leader and a kind and caring man who touched many lives. He will be missed. May the Lord bless and comfort you and your family during this time of grief. Sincerely, Pat Hall

Pat Hall - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

CM

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. I will always appreciate Jerry's support and belief in me as an educational leader. Charlie

Charlie McDaniel - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

CE

“ Jerry was a wonderful friend and will be missed by so many.

Cheryl Graddy Ellerbe - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JL

“ I was saddened to learn of the passing of Jerry! I worked with him for a number of years in the Lake County School System and had nothing but admiration for his dedication and many talents at all levels, where we often came in contact. His dedication to education and his personality and love of family were all inseparable. My condolences and prayers to his wife Patty, and family. R.I.P., Jerry!

Jeff Ladd - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Robert Gerald Smith

January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JB

“*###GESTURE###*”

Jean Quigley Becker - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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Cheryl Graddy Ellerbe - January 04, 2017 at 12:00 AM

BH

“*We are so sorry for your loss. I cannot imagine all of our lives without him Our thoughts and prayers are with you*”

Beth holder - January 03, 2017 at 12:00 AM