



Helen Faye Parker

March 18, 1929 - September 6, 2023

Helen F. Parker lived a long and fulfilling life. Very few have affected the lives of so many like Helen did. At the age of 94 she reached for the hand of Jesus to go home after suffering through a brief bout with lymphoma cancer. She was born March 18, 1929 to Tom Park and Belle Tarpley Park in Okolona, AR. Preceding her in death were her spouse Buddy Parker, her parents, a brother Tom Park, Jr. who was a prisoner of war in WWII, and a sister Relda Park Ebert.

Helen graduated from high school in Glendale, AR and immediately enrolled in the summer session at Henderson College and ultimately graduated from the University of Arkansas. Buddy Parker had finished three years of military service during WWII and returned to Henderson to complete his education. The two met and the rest is history. They married on August 22, 1947 and in 1948 Buddy accepted a coaching job in Ashdown, AR. Buddy and his bride rode a bus to Ashdown to begin their sports careers. Helen initially began teaching at the elementary school and at day's end she would walk over to the high school to help Buddy. Being a tomboy during her formative years, it was very easy to run around the basketball court. A couple of years later she was hired to coach the girls' basketball team at the high school. She coached for 35 years before becoming the Assistant Athletic Director. She retired in 1992 after spending 46 years with the Ashdown School District.

During her coaching career she was honored with numerous awards. The first was the Distinguished Service Award from the National Federation of High

School Coaches Association in 1982. Only sixteen people across the nation are awarded this each year. In 1983, the Arkansas High School Coaches Association presented her with the Curt King Award for not only teaching her girls how to play basketball but also how to be young ladies, take pride in themselves and to never give up. Being humble, she always said her players were the ones who were honored, not herself. In recognition of her many years of dedicated service to the Ashdown School District, in 1994 the high school gymnasium was officially dedicated the "Parker Gym". In 1996, she was among five former coaches inducted into the Arkansas High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame. However, the crowning achievement of her life came in 2001 when Helen was inducted into the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame. The last award she received was the Coach's Administrator honor in 2009.

One thing that she was extremely proud of was when she and area coaches and individuals across Arkansas held a writing campaign asking the Arkansas Athletics Association to allow girls to play in the same sports as boys. They won their petition and athletics were opened to both groups. Helen's basketball and volleyball teams won multiple Arkansas state championships. In addition, she also taught Physical Education, (PE) along with sponsoring the cheerleaders. Another passion of Helen's was the Ashdown Senior Center where she volunteered for over two decades. She taught the seniors how to line dance and do other exercises as well as delivering meals to those who could not get in line for their food. For many years Helen enjoyed participating in the plays put on by The Business and Professional Women's Club of Ashdown, even serving as President. Helen was a member of the Methodist Church in Ashdown. She led the teenagers for numerous years in the Methodist Youth Fellowship (MYF) program. Helen's life goal was to serve others and she fulfilled this goal amazingly.

Survivors include two nieces, Dana Park of Missouri and Jackie Ebert of Iowa; three nephews, Britt Park of Missouri, Sam Park of California and Tommy Ebert of Arizona. Additional survivors all in Missouri include her sister-in-law

Frieda Park, great-niece Veronica (Aaron) Park Everly, and two great-nephews, Lance (Kaitlin) Myer and Chris (Alicia) Park. Other survivors include many other relatives in Okolona, AR and numerous former students and friends.

Visitation is scheduled for Friday, September 8 from 3 pm – 6 pm at Madden Funeral Home in Ashdown. Services are Saturday, September 9 at 11 a.m. presided by Bro. Jim Cross. Interment will follow at Ashdown Cemetery where she will be laid beside the love of her life Buddy Parker who died in 1985.

Memorials should be sent to Ashdown Cemetery, PO Box 1135, Ashdown, AR 71822 or the First United Methodist Church at 145 Commerce, Ashdown, AR 71822.

Special thanks go to Dierksen Hospice as they walked through this tough time with us along with Bro. Jim Cross, Jo Moore, and her caretakers Mary Sellers and Barbara Penny. Unspeakable love and thanks go to Tina Darden and her life-long friend, Wynell Choate.

Cemetery Details

Ashdown Cemetery

Peyton Avenue
Ashdown, AR 71822

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 8. 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Madden Funeral Home - Ashdown
371 N 3rd Street
PO Box 428
Ashdown, AR 71822
(870) 898-3331
<https://maddenfuneralservice.com/>

Funeral Service

SEP 9. 11:00 AM (CT)

Madden Funeral Home - Ashdown
371 N 3rd Street
PO Box 428
Ashdown, AR 71822
(870) 898-3331
<https://maddenfuneralservice.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Madden Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Helen Faye Parker*



Madden Funeral Home - September 08, 2023 at 10:07 AM

CB

My basketball coach , loving caring lady, she was one who gave everyone a chance, I will cherish the memories firever...

Cynthia burris - September 09, 2023 at 09:23 AM



“ *Helen Faye Parker*

October 08, 2023 at 02:47 PM



“ *Mrs Parker did so much to me she taught me so much. I'll love her for. Ever*

Jason Lovewell - September 12, 2023 at 02:05 PM

MV

“ Coach Parker, what a beautiful and caring women. She was my P.E. teacher for many years and she was loved by many. Go rest high on that mountain Coach Parker, you will be missed by many.



Margaret L. Vaniver - September 10, 2023 at 09:59 AM

TF

“ One of the most loving and encouraging individuals I have ever known. A Can Do person!

Thomas B. Fomby - September 08, 2023 at 10:52 PM

BS

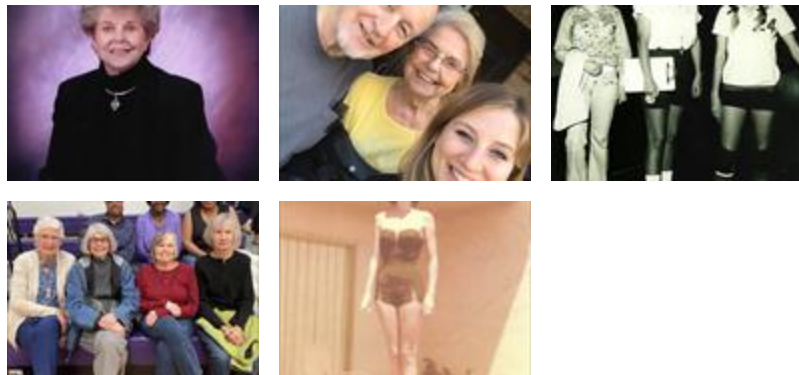
“ Bobbie L Schuetz lit a candle in memory of Helen Faye Parker



Bobbie L Schuetz - September 08, 2023 at 10:17 AM



“ 134 files added to the album Memories Album



Madden Funeral Home - September 08, 2023 at 10:07 AM

LH

“Helen was one of the "nicest persons" I have ever known, she always had something nice to say about everyone. She will be missed by everyone and especially those who came in contact with her. Helen, you can rest in peace. Leon Hood, Ashdown

Leon Hood - September 08, 2023 at 06:07 AM

JS

“There are no words to describe a person like Helen. My mother and Helen are first cousins. My mother loved her deeply. She was admired and loved by everyone in the Park family. On our last visit she brought several of her second cousin's together for a very special occasion. She will remain in our hearts.

Janet Broadway Scott - September 08, 2023 at 12:51 AM

SH

“ My mother was a member of one of Mrs . Parker’s All State Teams. They shared the same birthday 10 years apart. In school Mrs. Parker was my mom’s inspiration and best cheerleader. She even assisted my mother in running for rodeo queen. After graduation Mrs. Parker stayed in touch with my mother. When we would visit my grandparents Mrs. Parker would take us swimming and to Herb’s for milkshakes. Unfortunately, my mother suffered from mental health issues. Mrs . Parker continually called to provide support. When my mother left this Earth Mrs Parker continued to transfer her love and caring to me. When I was diagnosed with breast cancer 19 years ago she provide encouragement and prayers. She always remembered my birthday and continued to stay in contact over 40 years later. We last spoke this summer when she explained to me her diagnosis. My heart is heavy with the void of my connection with her but certain of the celebration welcoming her telling her Well done good and faithful servant. My condolences to her family. She told me stories of all of her nieces and nephews and how proud she was. I love you Mrs. Parker and am forever grateful for the impact you made to me. I will never pass a postcard rack that I do not think of you. You have traveled the ultimate destination now!

Sheri Matthews Hardin

Sheri Matthews Hardin - September 07, 2023 at 09:08 PM

AM

“ She one of sweetest lady . She will be miss.
Your in my thoughts and prayers. 🙏❤️🙏❤️



Annette Tremblay McCandless - September 07, 2023 at 06:15 PM

BK

“ *I always thought she was one of the prettiest ladies I had ever seen. Her mother and my grandmother (Eula Viola Tarpley Roberson) were sisters. I know she will be missed by all who loved and knew her. Prayers to her family.*

Brenda Roberson Karber - September 07, 2023 at 06:11 PM