

Mr. Arthur Gene Smith

November 20, 1927 - March 21, 2026

A celebration of the life of Mr. Arthur Gene “A. Gene” Smith, 98, of Henderson, will be held at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 26, 2026, at First Baptist Church, with Dr. David Higgs officiating. The family will receive friends at a reception in the mall area of the church immediately following the service.

A family graveside service will be held at Buckner Cemetery under the direction of Crawford-A. Crim Funeral Home.

Mr. Smith passed from this life to his home in Heaven on March 21, 2026, at his residence in Henderson. He was born November 20, 1927, in Pinehill, to the late Burl and Wincie (Buckner) Smith. He lived in Rusk County all of his life, except during his military service and college years. Mr. Smith graduated from Henderson High School in 1945 and then entered the United States Army, where he served as a lab technician, stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington, during World War II.

A. Gene attended The University of Texas at Austin, graduating in May 1952. He began his teaching career that same year in Gaston ISD, teaching physical science, biology, chemistry, and physics. While teaching at Gaston, he attended Stephen F. Austin State University, where he received his master’s degree in 1954. In 1957, Mr. Smith moved to Henderson High School, where he taught biology, chemistry, and physics. During the 1965–66

and 1966–67 school years, he served as assistant principal and chemistry teacher before being named principal of Henderson High School. For the next 25 years, his leadership at HHS helped shape generations of Lions and left a lasting impact on the campus. He retired on June 30, 1992, after 42 years of service in Texas public schools.

Mr. Smith married Barbara Wright on March 6, 1953, a union that spanned 58 years and was blessed with two loving children. He was a man of deep faith, having been saved at an early age at Roquemore Baptist Church. He loved his Lord, his family, his church, his students, his staff, and his friends. He was a longtime member of First Baptist Church, where he served on numerous church committees and as one of the Sunday School General officers for many years.

Gene was part of a generation that knew hard work and dedication. He was a rancher who loved his farm. He enjoyed gardening—a skill that benefited his immediate family and many others in the community year-round—and he also enjoyed fishing and hunting.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Barbara Ann Smith, Barbara's parents Truman and John Wright, sister-in-law and her husband Neva and Adrian Burk, and his brother-in-law, Talmadge Dowden.

Survivors include his children, Gena Smith Gardiner and husband Phil, and Steve Smith; his sister, JoAnne Dowden; granddaughter Elizabeth and husband John Tyson; great-grandchildren JT and Hunter Tyson, all of Henderson; and a host of cousins, extended family, many friends, former students, and colleagues. The family would like to express their heartfelt appreciation to the "Gene Team"—Teresa Strong, Tameeka Harris, Lois Windom, Jessica Renfro, William Renfro, and Nurse Traci Allen—along with the Vital Care Team and the Kindful Hospice Team, for their compassionate

care and support.

Honorary pallbearers will be Joel Hale, Cliff Harkless, Anthony Berry, Jimmy Sanders, Mark Gibson, Cliff Hurt, Don Howard, Lee Gearheart, David Velvin, Milton McGee, Ronnie Pruitt, Jessie Williams, Phil Gardiner, John Tyson, JT Tyson, Hunter Tyson, and Henderson ISD past and present educators.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the First Baptist Church Children's Building Fund, 207 W. Main St., Henderson, TX 75652; the Henderson ISD Education Foundation, P.O. Box 728, Henderson, TX 75653; or the Buckner Cemetery Association, 1203 Westwood Dr., Henderson, TX 75654.

Words of comfort may be shared with the family at www.crawfordacrim.com.

Cemetery Details

Buckner Cemetery

FM 1798 at FM 348
Henderson, TX 75652

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

MAR 26. 4:00 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church
207 West Main
Henderson, TX 75652

Reception

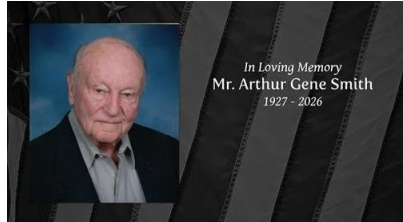
MAR 26. 5:00 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church
207 West Main
Henderson, TX 75652

Tribute Wall



“ *Crawford A.Crim Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Crawford- A.Crim Funeral Home - March 25 at 04:09 PM

MT

*Mr. Smith played a very vital role in our high school years.
Rest in peace.
Mike & Delores Toon*

Mike & Delores Toon - March 25 at 08:19 PM

AA

*My sincere condolences and prayers to the entire Smith family. Mr. Gene and Mrs. Hazel Carroll gave me the opportunity to serve students of H.H. S. Thanks again Sir.
Rest in Him. Forever grateful.
Annie Barron Arline*

Annie B. Arline - March 26 at 09:37 PM

WG

Gena, I am so sorry for your loss. Mr. Smith was always so kind to me in HS. He and my mother graduated HHS together and he always asked me about her. And on one occasion, because I was one yr. your elder I suppose, he asked me - with his little chuckle - if you were behaving...such a great principal and man. Perhaps he and my mom are telling HHS stories from the 40s in Glory. :)

Wendy Gray - March 28 at 10:05 AM

CB

Gena sorry for your loss

Clint Barton - March 28 at 06:00 PM

SS

“ *Susan Ann Summers lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith*



Susan Ann Summers - May 02 at 11:06 AM

LR

“ *Laura Ralston lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Laura Ralston - March 31 at 05:02 AM

CB

“ *Colleen Briggs lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Colleen Briggs - March 30 at 02:12 AM

AG

“ *Alvin & Ann Green lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith*



Alvin & Ann Green - March 29 at 07:48 AM

ES

“ *Elwanda Hunt Sheridan lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Elwanda Hunt Sheridan - March 27 at 12:53 PM

KH

“ *Kurt Hunt lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Kurt Hunt - March 26 at 09:44 PM

JM

“ *I don't think can attempt to try match either of the poignant messges written by Jimmy Summers or Jim Cowart. They just nailed the essence of Gene Smith.*

He was a man who breathed rare air..

Skip Miller

James McNee (Skip) Miller - March 26 at 06:38 PM

TW

“ *Timothy Watts lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Timothy Watts - March 26 at 03:11 PM

NR

“ *Nelwyn Richardson lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Nelwyn Richardson - March 26 at 01:43 PM

AP

“ *ashley pruit lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith*



ashley pruit - March 26 at 11:03 AM

VA

“ *Vernon Arthus lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith*



Vernon Arthus - March 26 at 10:31 AM

AR

“ *Colby & Amy Rockey*



Amy Rockey - March 26 at 09:21 AM

DK

“ *Our Sincere Condolences*

David & Dianna (Duran) Kelley



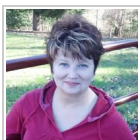
David & Dianna Kelley - March 26 at 01:28 AM

DB

“ *Damon Bassett lit a candle in memory of
Arthur Gene Smith*



Damon Bassett - March 26 at 12:25 AM



“ *Becky Hammett Rountree lit a candle in
memory of Arthur Gene Smith*



Becky Hammett Rountree - March 25 at 10:55 PM

-M

“ -Amy Miley-Payne lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



-Amy Miley-Payne - March 25 at 08:51 PM

SC

“ scott & Dawn craw lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



scott & Dawn craw - March 25 at 06:56 PM

SS

“ Susan Burk Stevens lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



Susan Burk Stevens - March 25 at 05:47 PM

DC

“ My deepest sympathy to Mr Smith's family, Gina, thank you so much for bringing him to our 50th HHS reunion in 2022. It was so nice to get 1on1 time with him to reminisce high school years. Was truly an honor and joy to have this man in my life. ❤️

Deborah Corley - March 25 at 04:39 PM

DC

“ We are so sorry for your loss. Mr. Smith was always so kind. Praying for your family!



Debbie Cook - March 25 at 02:11 PM



“ I never got to spend a lot of time with Mr. Smith, but the memories I have are good ones! I've also enjoyed many stories shared by teacher friends over the years. Love and prayers for the family. Jake, Kenneth, and Rhonda Keeling

Jake Keeling - March 25 at 11:32 AM

PE

“ Thoughts & prayers are with you Gena, Steve, and Jojo. May the Lord strengthen & comfort the entire family during this difficult loss.



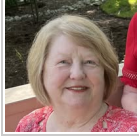
Penny - March 24 at 11:18 PM

LR

“ Linda Dunn Reneau lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Linda Dunn Reneau - March 24 at 05:33 PM



“ *Beth Turner lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Beth Turner - March 24 at 04:18 PM



“ *I'm so sorry for the loss of your Dad. Mr. Smith was always friendly and Jim had a high regard for him. Prayers for the family.*

Wilma Young - March 24 at 04:11 PM



“ *The volume of tributes to Gene show the person he was and how much he was loved and respected. I will miss seeing him at family gatherings.*

Dinah Crim - March 24 at 03:06 PM



“ *Greg W lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith*



Greg W - March 24 at 01:49 PM

RG

“ I am so sorry for your loss. Prayers lifted up for your family.



Rebecca Glass - March 24 at 01:04 PM

KF

“ Kay Farley lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



Kay Farley - March 24 at 12:39 PM

RE

“ Robert & Dianne Everitt lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



Robert & Dianne Everitt - March 24 at 11:29 AM

TB

“ Mrs. Gardiner so sorry for your loss. Desirée Barton and I want to say that we are saying prayers for you sweetheart and we are sending you hugs and love. Rest In peace Mr. Gene.



Toni Barton - March 24 at 11:14 AM

BB

“ *Britt Burt lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith*



Britt Burt - March 24 at 11:05 AM

CB

My thoughts and prayers to the family, Mr. Smith was my principal and was a great man and mentor, I honestly believe I would not have graduated if not for him.

Casey Barrett - March 24 at 03:27 PM

BH

“ *Brent Hale lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith*



Brent Hale - March 24 at 10:52 AM

SW

“ *Sally Mullins Wilcox lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith*



Sally Mullins Wilcox - March 24 at 09:05 AM

BK

“ Even though after we moved to Florida I lost touch. Family has always been important to me. Kay and I would talk about when all the cousins were young,, about things they got into. So now rest in peace my dear cousin. I love you and really wish we could have been closer. Barbara. Your younger cousin



Barbars Kighy - March 24 at 07:32 AM

KB

“ Kim Buckner lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



Kim Buckner - March 24 at 07:05 AM

CG

“ Connye Poovey Guy lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith

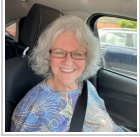


Connye Poovey Guy - March 24 at 01:05 AM

JS

“ Teacher, principal, business owner, financier, rancher, mentor, friend...a life well lived that positively impacted many young minds in the community. We are all blessed to have known Gene Smith and his family. I extend my condolences and prayers to the family.

Jimmy Summers - March 24 at 12:56 AM



“ *Gena and Steve. You are in my prayers and on my heart. What amazing times we all shared. Your Dad was such an amazing man. I love you both.*

Stephanie Osteen - March 24 at 12:54 AM

FV

“ *GENE SMITH. Those two words cause me, and I suspect most everyone to pause. And remember with awe. Gene was a relative, teacher, friend, mentor, fisherman, story teller, historian, principal, confidant, leader, cattleman, family man, supporter and so much more to me. And to others. Gene taught me physics and chemistry in 1964-65. He tolerated a knucklehead teenager and introduced the principles and discipline that inspired me to be an engineer. Respect....wish we all could command that which he embodied. I watched him and his life model and decided to follow his lead to The University of Texas. We were both very proud to be Longhorns. I am positive he followed my career and life with amusement, but never meddled. Over the decades, we communicated.....but never enough. I missed and left too much of his knowledge and wisdom behind. He loved Pine Hill and Pine Grove and all the neighboring rural communities and churches. Gene loved HISD, Henderson, Rusk County and the people that made it special. He loved his family. Gene was special. I am so much better for knowing him. He made a difference. Thank you Gene.*

Fred Vinson - March 23 at 11:42 PM

DF

“ *I graduated in 1970 , when it came time for our class to buy our class rings , Mr Smith bought mine for me because I didn't have the money to buy it. A couple of months later, I was able to pay him back ! He was truly a good caring man indeed.*

daniel Flanagan - March 23 at 11:04 PM

VF

“ Gena and Steve I’m so sorry for your loss. Your dad was a special man. He was a major positive influence in my life and thousands of other young people that went through Henderson High School. He and your mother both here such dear friends of my parents. I remember many fun family times for the Smiths and the Sloans.

I know your mom is rejoicing in Heaven as your dad joins her there. Love to you both!

Vanessa Faulkner - March 23 at 11:02 PM

DM

“ He drank coffee with my dad at the coffee shop every morning back in the 70s. I never could get by with nothin'! Daddy knew every time I would spin my tires in the school parking lot. LOL!

Donna Hudgins Melton - March 23 at 09:50 PM

CH

“ Charles B. Heath lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



Charles B. Heath - March 23 at 09:39 PM

DS

“ May the Lord bring much comfort to each and every family member during this time of sorrow.



Doyle and Margaret Sumrall - March 23 at 09:08 PM

JH

“ Jerry and Carol Phillips Harris lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



Jerry and Carol Phillips Harris - March 23 at 08:08 PM

JT

“ Jill Dulany Turner lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



Jill Dulany Turner - March 23 at 08:02 PM

SW

“ Sharon Whitehead lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



Sharon Whitehead - March 23 at 07:56 PM

JW

“ Joey Watts lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



Joey Watts - March 23 at 06:54 PM

PD

“ Gena, my prayers are with you during this time of celebrating the life of your dad. He was a beloved man in Henderson.

Pat Dawson - March 23 at 06:48 PM

RW

“ We have known Mr. Smith since he taught science at Gaston High School. He was always a special teacher to us. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family . Robert and Janet Williams



Robert and Janet Williams - March 23 at 06:22 PM

JN

“ My memories of Mr. Smith were of a kind, patient, caring man who loved his students. He was a wonderful High School Principal. Many of us remember him with great fondness. I wish him Godspeed on his journey and Blessings to the family.

Judy Romer Nutter. HHS Class of 1970

Judy Romer Nutter - March 23 at 06:21 PM

TH

“ Tana Hall lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



Tana Hall - March 23 at 06:01 PM

LR

“ *Linda Rogers lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith*



Linda Rogers - March 23 at 05:37 PM

CS

“ *Carl & Diana Smith lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith*



Carl & Diana Smith - March 23 at 05:36 PM

DW

“ *I really hate to hear of the passing of Mr. Smith. He was a really nice man and I would bump into him in town every once and while and he always had time to talk. It has been 54 years this spring since I graduated. In the late 80's he would buy 50 tons of alfalfa pellets every winter and we would deliver to his farm in Pine Hill.*

Dewayne Walker - March 23 at 05:00 PM

SP

“ *Sue Plummer lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith*



Sue Plummer - March 23 at 04:48 PM

DW

“ Dewayne Walker lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



Dewayne Walker - March 23 at 04:45 PM

JC

“ My condolences to the entire family.

Jim Coode - March 23 at 04:41 PM

TV

“ Tom Vaughn lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Tom Vaughn - March 23 at 03:24 PM



“ My friendship with Gene began in 1959 as a student in his chemistry class. That relation grew immensely over the years. Gene was a valuable tutor in finance, cattle, hay production and life values.

Gene's mother was my 9th grade math teacher and guided me in creating my North Star!

My warmest regards and prayers are extended to Gena in her loss of her daddy!

Joe White

Joe White - March 23 at 03:08 PM

RC

“ Please know you are all in our prayers.



Randy and Misty Culp - March 23 at 02:59 PM

SR

“ *The Reed Family - Jim, Suzanne, Ted, and Lex Reed*



Suzanne Reed - March 23 at 02:46 PM

D-

“ *Prayers*



Donna J Aaron -Dorsey - March 23 at 02:02 PM

JW

“ *Gene Smith was such a dear man. For years, Gene, Phil Lemon, Richard Vernon, and Norwyn Williams, my husband, were hunting buddies. Now all four of them are gone. The four of them shared many deer seasons on their lease at Phil's ranch. Gene was a good friend to my family. I hope they are all together remembering the good times they shared.*

Jean Williams - March 23 at 01:37 PM

SH

“ Sue Henderson lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Sue Henderson - March 23 at 12:59 PM

CT

“ Chuck Towe lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Chuck Towe - March 23 at 12:51 PM

CN

“ Clay Newcomb & Frances Newcomb lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Clay Newcomb & Frances Newcomb - March 23 at 11:50 AM

BG

“ Praying for peace and comfort for family and friends.
Bonnie Geddie



Bonnie Geddie - March 23 at 11:23 AM

MC

“ Milton and Angie Christian lit a candle in memory of Arthur Gene Smith



Milton and Angie Christian - March 23 at 09:47 AM

CW

“ Many of us could say he was our high school principal. Such a nice man, so well-respected, and one of the giants of Henderson ISD. He will be missed in our community. Sending prayers of comfort to all the family.



Cyndi Walker - March 23 at 09:41 AM

CL

“ Charlotte Lockridge lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Charlotte Lockridge - March 23 at 09:34 AM

CG

“ Like many in Henderson Mr. Smith will be remembered as the Henderson High school Principle. He was a fine man. So sorry for your loss. Candy Duncan Grant



Candy Grant - March 23 at 09:32 AM

SC

“ *Great Principal. He loved us dropping off fish fillets at his house.
RIP*

Sandy Christian - March 23 at 09:32 AM

RG

“ *Randy Griffith lit a candle in memory of Mr.
Arthur Gene Smith*



Randy Griffith - March 23 at 09:30 AM

CF

“ *Cliff And Krista Furtick lit a candle in memory
of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Cliff and Krista Furtick - March 23 at 08:52 AM

CS

“ *Craig And Paula Sweeney lit a candle in
memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Craig and Paula Sweeney - March 23 at 08:28 AM

ED

“ Elaine Davis lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Elaine Davis - March 23 at 08:20 AM

JJ

“ Jason&Susan Jarrell lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Jason&Susan Jarrell - March 23 at 08:01 AM

BB

“ Blake Ballenger lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Blake Ballenger - March 23 at 07:35 AM

GK

“ Gene Kelsey lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Gene Kelsey - March 23 at 07:31 AM

DC

“ *Mr Gene Smith knew my Granddaddy. They fox hunted together many many years ago. He was Principal at the High School when I went to work in the cafeteria, which is now HMS! Gina, we are so sorry but what a life well lived!*



David & Kathy Chapman - March 23 at 01:46 AM

TK

“ *Oh Gena, I was so sad to hear about your dad. I loved him dearly. He was such a kind and gentle man. I am so glad we got to see him at the Thrasher reunion. He was such a mess, just like my daddy. Those two were a pair. We will keep y'all in our prayers. ❤️*



Terri Thrasher Kring - March 22 at 10:14 PM

PH

“ *Peggy Hunt lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Peggy Hunt - March 22 at 09:58 PM

DA

“ Praye
Donna Dorsey Aaron



Donna J Aaron - March 22 at 09:37 PM

GW

“ Gary Wilkerson lit a candle in memory of Mr.
Arthur Gene Smith



Gary Wilkerson - March 22 at 09:28 PM

MM

“ Mike Mason lit a candle in memory of Mr.
Arthur Gene Smith



Mike Mason - March 22 at 09:25 PM

EB

“ Eric & Amber Brown lit a candle in memory of
Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Eric & Amber Brown - March 22 at 09:22 PM

TC

“ Tony And Anita Cavaliere lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Tony and Anita Cavaliere - March 22 at 09:12 PM

DR

“ Donald & Donna Reynolds lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Donald & Donna Reynolds - March 22 at 09:00 PM

CB

“ Cindy H Belcher lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Cindy H Belcher - March 22 at 08:33 PM

JC

“ James & Carol Chambless lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



James & Carol Chambless - March 22 at 08:27 PM

DZ

“ Don Zwhitehead lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Don Zwhitehead - March 22 at 07:51 PM

DG

“ Darren Grammer lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Darren Grammer - March 22 at 07:22 PM

LW

“ Lacy Weaver lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Lacy Weaver - March 22 at 07:17 PM

SM

“ Shannon Marsh lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Shannon Marsh - March 22 at 07:11 PM

SC

“ Suzanne Cross lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Suzanne Cross - March 22 at 07:01 PM

JC

“ Ii guess 1 of my high school teachers thought Mr. SMITH was lonesome at work as she sent me for a lot of "visits" to his office. He always made time 4 me and we would visit. He never laid a hand n.or punished me. After a while, I was later sent to his assistant Mr. Wylie, where my visits were not as cordial. Decades later Mr. SMITH & I had many visits together when we would meet, primarily at funerals. Mr. Smith was always a kind & patient gentleman with me & I will miss being able to share visits with him here on earth.again. My sympathy to his loved ones.
Most Sincerely, jim cowart

jim cowart - March 22 at 06:43 PM

JB

“ Joe Dan & Margaret Green Brown lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith



Joe Dan & Margaret Green Brown - March 22 at 06:30 PM

CK

“ *Chris And Linda King lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Chris and Linda King - March 22 at 06:22 PM

HC

“ *Harriet craig*



Harriet Craig - March 22 at 06:18 PM

BS

“ *Bob And Monica Sanders lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Bob and Monica Sanders - March 22 at 06:08 PM

BS

“ *Brad & Lou Ann Standard lit a candle in memory of Mr. Arthur Gene Smith*



Brad & Lou Ann Standard - March 22 at 05:48 PM