



Mr. Jess Burks Alford Jr.

March 25, 1933 - November 9, 2023

Jess Burks Alford Jr. Passed peacefully in the night of November 9, 2023 at the age of 90. Just a month before, he was savoring life in the East Mountains of Tijeras, NM, indulging in activities like hiking, bird watching and and relishing lunches at his beloved Roots Farm Cafe where he was known and loved. There, he was a cherished figure and always welcomed there with a “Hi Jess!...the usual?”

Jess, originally from Paris, Texas grew up alongside his sister, mother and father who raised Angus cattle on a ranch near by. He often spoke of his childhood dreams of being a pilot and a photographer, aspirations he not only fulfilled but surpassed.

In 1954, Jess graduated from the University of Texas with a BA and went on to serve in the Air Force from 1955 to 1958, piloting various aircraft including B-25's. During his time in the Air Force, he also served as an instructor, sharing his expertise with fellow pilots. After a decade in real estate, Jess discovered his love of photography eventually making a significant impact in the commercial and food photography realms. His

accomplishments

include receiving an international advertising Clio award in 1985 for his photo of an egg yolk

falling from a cracked shell into a skillet heating on a stove's burner. "I went through 13 dozen eggs on that one," he says.

Jess dedicated his lens to environmental and nature photography, collaborating with the Texas

Committee on Natural Resources. His work contributed to the publication of "A Guide to the

Wilderness Areas of East Texas" by the University of Texas in 1986.

Subsequently, he

continued his career as an environmental photographer, collaborating with Getty Images and

various environmental groups.

Jess devoted nearly a decade of his life to conservation, actively participating and serving on

the board of Wild Earth Guardians, a Santa Fe-based environmental advocacy organization.

Through his lens, he not only celebrated the vibrant array of birds and wildlife thriving in New

Mexico's natural habitat but also documented the triumphs achieved by the Guardians, such

as the restoration of overgrazed rivers to their pristine, natural state.

A man of deep knowledge and convictions, Jess embraced natural healing principles. Faced

with a diagnosis of melanoma cancer in his late 70s, he opted for an alternative path. Choosing

to forego conventional treatments like chemotherapy and surgery, Jess successfully cured

himself by adopting a macrobiotic diet and practicing mindfulness.

Jess was inspirational to so many through his irreverence and grit, balanced with creative gift

giving, personal authenticity and a big heart.

Survived by his son Jess Burks Alford III and daughter Ella Ann Alford of Dallas, TX. He is also

remembered by his grandson Jess Burks Alford IV and great granddaughter Adalyn Grace

Alford residing in Corpus Christi. Additionally, he is survived by nephews Matt Watson and

William Watson, and niece Larkin Watson Foreman.

Jess Alford Jr.'s legacy lives on through his family, friends, and the indelible mark he left on the

world of photography and environmental advocacy.

Graveside service was held in Henderson, TX, Nov 29, 2023 with Rev. Mike Mayhugh officiating. Interment was under the direction of Crawford - A. Crim Funeral Home of Henderson.

Condolences may be made at www.crawfordacrim.com.

Cemetery Details

Lakewood Memorial Park

1001 Van Buren St.
Henderson, TX 75652

Previous Events

Graveside

NOV **29**. 12:00 PM (CT)

Lakewood Memorial Park
Hwy 64 and 323
Henderson, TX 75652

Tribute Wall

JL

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Jay Larsen - January 18, 2025 at 03:12 PM

JL

“ So sorry to learn of Jess's passing. He was our neighbor in Dallas and we shared our love of photography and the outdoors. We would exchange holiday cards for years after we both moved away and today I just got this year's card back... so sad and he was such a wonderful neighbor and friend all these years.

Jay Larsen - January 18, 2025 at 03:03 PM

AC

“ Jess was a childhood friend. Our birthdays were a month apart and we always celebrated well in our neighborhood. We were in East Paris School and spent a lot of time playing on the school yard with all the neighborhood kids. I knew he was enjoying a life he designed in NM and so happy he had that opportunity. May he forever rest in glorious peace.

Alice Delphenis Coker

Alice Coker - December 14, 2023 at 03:24 PM

AA

Thank you so much Alice for sharing your story. Are you still in Paris?

Ann Alford - March 25, 2024 at 06:47 PM

SS

“ *I was trailing a decade behind you at Paris High, but going by your house each day kept up the memory of the Alford's! We might not have known each other, but all of Paris kept up with your life and were proud you were an alumnus of our town! Great life. Thanks.*
Skipper Steely

Skipper Steely - November 30, 2023 at 02:12 PM