



## **Fortenberry, Joe Ted**

1951-2022

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Joe Ted Fortenberry of Fort Worth, passed away at his home Jan. 6, 2022, from long term medical conditions.

He was born July 6, 1951, in Denton, the son of Hardie and Betty Fortenberry. He spent his early years on the family dairy farm just off the Slidell- Greenwood Freeway.

At the age of 13, he moved with his family to the big city of Hurst, where he played basketball for L. D. Bell High School, made many friends, had more fun than homework and graduated with the class of 1969. He stayed in touch with many of these friends and enjoyed a golf game with them on a regular basis even if scores were sometimes fudged and foot wedges were part of the game. His upbringing and heritage made Joe a true Texan who enjoyed sports, hunting, fishing and the outdoors his entire life. Possibly with not quite the same level of enjoyment but also as a part of his heritage, he was a 5th generation Texas cowboy. He spent a couple of weeks each year working at the Fort Worth Stock

Show for 30 years. Moving thousands of sometimes uncooperative head of cattle over the years gave him a great love of a good steak. He loved the shooting sciences and regularly participated in the yearly CASA sporting clays contest in support of child advocacy. Over the years Joe worked at a variety of jobs including men's apparel sales associate, wallpaper installation, concert security, bartender, fitness entrepreneur, right-of-way inspector and self-described cowologist.

Joe retired from the Texas Department of Transportation in 2016. He was also a pretty good photographer, camouflage artist and performance artist. On a good day at sunset, he was a philosopher. As the oldest, Joe was often given the enormous responsibility of riding herd on his brother and sisters in the absence of the parents. While this led to inevitable but trivial struggles for authority, he also provided creative entertainment. This was a time before cell phones, personal computers, smart TVs or Amazon. Fun was what you made it and Joe always thought of something because he was a fun guy. We climbed the roof to throw toy soldiers off with parachutes and then slid off the roof in boxes. He built a sled out of scrap wood when the water pump overflow froze over. We played croquet with baseballs, hammers and coat hangers. He created two golf courses, each with one hole. When he got his driver's license, he took us to the Dairy Queen which was a huge treat. One of Joe's oldest friends and partners in misadventure, recently described Joe this way, "Joe was a reverse Will Rogers. He never met a man who didn't like him." That says it all. He will be sorely missed by many friends and much family.

Joe was preceded in death by his father, Hardie Fortenberry; mother, Betty House; and sister, Pamela Garrett.

He is survived by brother, Dale Fortenberry and wife, Vivian; sister, Lynne Butler and husband, Robert; niece, Monica Higdon and husband, Stephen, and their three children Simon, Genevieve and William Hardie.

Celebration of Life will be 1 p.m., May 21, at Gage Cantina, 1197 Old Greenwood Road, Decatur.