



Kelley, Kenneth 'Shorty'

1940-2023

By [Donna Bean](#) | Published on October 20, 2023

Kenneth 'Shorty' Kelley, 82, passed away peacefully on Thursday, Oct. 12, 2023, at his home in Montague.

Funeral services are at noon Friday, Oct. 27, at the Montague County Cowboy Church in Montague, with Pastor Joe Caballero officiating. Family will receive friends 10:30-11:30 a.m. Oct. 27, prior to the service at the church. Interment will take place 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 29 at Foster Cemetery in Foster, Oklahoma.

Kenneth was born Nov. 26, 1940, in Decatur. Anyone who ever met Kenneth knew he loved rodeo and the cowboy way of life. He started his career roping chickens on foot. After roping his first calf at the age of six, his destiny was set. He joined the PRCA in 1961, often entering the steer wrestling in order to compete for all-around, while riding his roping horse. He placed at many of the major rodeos including San Antonio, Houston, Denver, Calgary, Cheyenne, and Fort Worth. 1966 was a pinnacle year when he qualified for the NFR (National

Finals Rodeo), finishing eighth for the year and in the top 25 for several years after. He won the Texas Circuit year-end four times and the Henrietta rodeo three years in a row. In 2011, he was inducted into the Texas Rodeo Hall of Fame. As time marched on, he eventually shifted his focus to the Senior Circuit and competed in numerous associations where he won multiple championships. He won the Texas Senior Pro Rodeo finals saddle at the age of 80 and won at the last rodeo this year, competing at the age of 82.

In addition to competing, he was an accomplished rope horse trainer. Always training his own, he was known to produce some of the top roping horses, often selling to some of the top ropers in the country. He enjoyed working with people of all levels, regardless of whether they were just getting started or top professionals. For the past four years he has been perfecting the skills of an up-and-coming breakaway roper.

Kenneth has been a member of the Montague County Cowboy Church for 14 years where he enjoys attending services and helping out with the arena events.

He is preceded in death by his father, Ollie; mother, Louise; brothers, Joe and Ben; and niece, Rhonda.

Kenneth is survived by his wife, Sharon; brothers, Larry and Robert; sister, Paula; sons, John and Michael; stepson, Coy Harris; stepdaughter, Jami Lybbert; grandchildren, Dusty, Ashley, Sydney, Jack, Jake, Garrett, Emma and Cooper; great-granddaughters, Shaylie, McKenna and Saige; and several nieces and nephews.

Arrangements are entrusted to the White Family Funeral Home of Bowie.