

John was born on June 22, 1941, in Amarillo, Texas, to Reginald Curtis and Edith Loraine (Keeter) Ballard. He graduated from Claude High School class of 1959 and then obtained his degree in Range Management from Texas Tech in 1963. On September 21, 1963, he and Rita Jo Lee exchanged vows and began their life together.

John loved to work. When he first returned to Claude he worked for American Breeders Service. He farmed and ranched in Armstrong, Carson, and Moore Counties. John loved the land and his stewardship of what the Lord had provided was of great importance to him. John gave unselfishly of his time in many different areas. He served numerous terms on the Claude ISD School Board, stretching across four decades. He served on the Board of Directors of the Texas Cattle Feeders Association, Director of First National Bank of Claude (now known as Citizens Bank), Director of the Staked Plains Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Masonic Lodge of Claude. Most important to John was the First Baptist Church of Claude where he served as a Deacon and taught Sunday School. His faith and walk with the Lord were the center of John's life.

John also liked to play a bit as well. Anyone who knew John for very long had witnessed, or been victim of, his orneriness. He loved quail hunting in the Panhandle and Rolling Plains, and flyfishing in Colorado, Alaska, and southern Canada. He was an avid fan of Texas Tech athletics, and on Saturdays in the fall you would find John and Rita in Lubbock, decked-out in scarlet and black, screaming for the Red Raiders.

John is preceded in death by his parents, his sons, Lee Ballard and Todd Ballard, and brother, Ben Ballard and wife Sue. Those left to cherish his memories are his beloved wife of over 60 years, Rita Ballard of the home, daughters, Robin McKay and husband Rex III of Lubbock, and Kara Harrell and husband Rick of Spearman; grandchildren, Will and Paige McKay of Plano, Mary and Taylor Beadles of Lubbock, Mason McKay of Lubbock, Payton and Laramie Priest of Canyon, and John Reid Harrell of Amarillo, as well as five great-grandchildren and many extended family and cherished friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that a donation be made in honor of John K. Ballard to First Baptist Church of Claude.

Celebrating The Life Of



JOHN KEETER BALLARD

June 22, 1941 ~ May 15, 2026