



## Raymond Ford

He was born on February 17, 1918 in Winslow, Arkansas, where his daddy worked for the railroad. In the early 1920's, the family moved in mule drawn wagons to a small farm that they had leased in eastern Oklahoma. After several nights camping along the way, they arrived at their destination and sold all but one of the mules for supplies and seed money. When Raymond was eight, both his parents became ill, forcing the boys to quit school and find jobs to put food on the table. His first job consisted at using a double bladed axe and the remaining mule to hand hew and haul railroad ties out of the woods. That first year, in his spare time, he grew a crop of sweet taters, which he stored in a small shed where he slept and tended a small fire to keep his crop from freezing. He developed a work ethic that sustained him and his offspring through numerous difficult times. By the sweat of his brow, he raised six children who never lacked a thing. He worked as a roughneck in the oil fields, a hay buckler, a logger, a service station owner and a sawmill operator. He retired at the young age of eighty and continued to maintain his home and vegetable garden until the condition of his body prevented him from doing so.

He had the love of his life by his side for fifty-four years. He is survived by his children, grandchildren, great grand children, great-great grand children, a sister, a cousin and many friends and neighbors. He went to be with his Lord on January 5, 2012. He will be remembered as an honest, hard working, good man. "There will be peace in the valley for me." - Red Foley



# Tribute Wall

JK

“ *No matter how much time passes, I will always miss our Daddy. I'm so very grateful for the short time I was able to spend with him over these past years; and for the many phone calls, letters and shared photos in between those visits. Sure wish I could kiss his ole bald head one more time...*

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**Johnnie Elaine (Lee) Kirby** - September 19, 2012 at 11:59 AM

“ *In the end, our lives are measured not by what we own but by how we are remembered. By such standards, Grandpa Lee is an absolute treasure.*

*Grandpa Lee has always seemed pretty much the same to me. Since I was a child he's been larger than life and as close to perfect as anyone I've known. If I told him that, though, Grandpa would probably just look down and shake his head. He was a humble, hard-working man who was comfortable with himself and his life. Whether it was in a saw mill, his amazing garden, or anywhere else, Grandpa worked hard without complaining. Never appearing to doubt himself, he just did what needed to be done and kept going. Grandpa did the same thing through the tough times in life. No matter what happened, he just dealt with it and kept going. He chose to be content. Through both his words and his example, Grandpa has helped me do the same through some of my own tough times.*

*Of course, he wasn't all work. One of the things I'll miss most is Grandpa's laugh. He always had a wonderful laugh that seemed to come from his whole being. Though I remember him laughing many times throughout the years, my favorite of those memories is from the last time I saw him. That was when I got to introduce him to my little girl, who was too young to even roll over yet. He never tired of playing and talking with her. His "Boo, boo, boo, boo" made her smile every time. Of course he'd laugh and smile too. It was awesome!*

*The only major change that stands out in my mind when I think about Grandpa is his voice. I'm not talking about the sound of it but about how he used it. When I was younger, I would have described Grandpa as a quiet man. He wasn't antisocial in any way, just quiet. When Grandma died, Grandpa seemed to find his voice. In my mind, Grandma had always been the talkative one, telling stories and singing songs. When she left us, Grandpa seemed to take over her role, helping to fill the void. He started telling the stories. Or maybe I just chose to listen in a different way. Either way I'm grateful for his amazing memories and willingness to share them. It's hard for me to believe how much I miss this man who I talked to*

*once a month, at best. Knowing that he was ready to move on to the next life, free from pain and reunited with loved ones who went on before him, has made it easier. I can even be joyful for him. He was a truly special man who's left an immeasurable legacy behind. I will continue to benefit from his example, and I will help my children get to know him through my memories. We will all be better people because of Grandpa Lee.*

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**Donna Knopp** - September 19, 2012 at 11:59 AM

MC

“ *Some of my most cherished memories of my grandpa are from the times I got to go with him to work. I don't really know if he was aware of it, but in the hay fields, the gas station, and the saw mill, he was teaching me. He taught me about pride, timeliness, and how to appreciate hard work rather than resent it. I will continue to love and honor my grandpa the best way that I can, by teaching my daughters those same values that he taught me.*

*As he is laid to rest, I will be celebrating his life and thinking about all that I've learned from his quiet and tender strength. I'll be working my day job with a pair of his hay hooks on my desk. I will craft some quality work and send it off to my customers on time while my mind swims with childhood memories of sweaty-hot hay fields, ice-cold gas station soda bottles, and hauling loads of ties to Watts. I'll be remembering the smell of fresh sawdust and the sounds of chainsaws echoing through the woods.*

*I'll imagine the sight of my grandpa, still dressed in his dark work clothes, giving my grandma a hug.*

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**Mike Corsaro** - September 19, 2012 at 11:59 AM

KL

“ Sending healing thoughts and prayers to the family of a very special man.

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**Karen Bruce Lee** - September 19, 2012 at 11:59 AM

HB

“ We are very sorry for your loss. Sending you many hugs & much love!

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**Henry, Felicia, & Trent Bell** - September 19, 2012 at 11:59 AM

SB

“ I walked into the home of Mr. Raymond Lee on Sept 3rd, 2010 and started working for him as his personal care giver. It did not take long for Mr. Ray to walk into my heart. Soon he was just pops, the grandfather I never had, and I was his adopted granddaughter. We shared many good times, along with some hard times. Most of all we shared a mutual respect and love for each other. I always told pops that he was a blessing to me, that he brought much joy to my life, and that I loved him. Pops; I truly was blessed to have known you! You impacted my life more than you ever realized while you were here. Now you know and see the love you filled my heart with. Thank you Pops! I will miss you greatly. looking forward to the day I see your happy smiling face again.

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**Sharla Bennett** - September 19, 2012 at 11:59 AM