



Dennis Yoakum, Sr.

June 4, 2019

Dennis Jearl Yoakum, Sr., Oklahoma educator, passed away on Tuesday, June 4, 2019 at Norman Veterans Center, Norman, OK. On 20 Oct 1922, he was third of six children born to pre-statehood natives, Dennis A. and Velma (Jaye) Yoakum, three miles south of Rosedale, OK. Proud of his heritage, he was grandson of Martin and Laura (Miller) Yoakum and John M. and Mattie (Dobyns) Jaye. A 1940 graduate of Rosedale High School, he left Oklahoma to work in the grape vineyards and walnut groves on the Fuller Ranch in California. By Christmas of 1940 he had returned to Rosedale and to his high school sweetheart, Hazel. He enrolled at OAMC, now OSU, in 1941, and began working that summer for Wilson and Company in OKC. He wed the love of his life, Hazel Cathryn Whitfield, on 14 March 1942 in Purcell, OK. On 16 December 1942 he entered the Army Air Force serving three years as a radio repairmen and airborne radar technician, in the 1073rd Signal Corps, during WWII in North Africa, Italy and Corsica. He was honorably discharged on 17 November 1945 and enlisted as a Sgt. serving in the Active Reserves for four years. In 1949, courtesy of the GI Bill, he was able to earn a Bachelors of Arts Degree in Education from Central State College, now UCO, Edmond, OK, in 1952. That fall he began teaching junior and senior high math and coaching in Loyal Public School, Kingfisher Co., OK. After completing his Masters Degree in Education in 1954 he received his Administrative Degree in 1955 from Phillips University, Enid, OK. That same year he accepted a position in Purcell as Mary Simpson Elementary School Principal and 6th

grade teacher. Retiring as the Purcell Middle School Principal, after 36 years as an educator, he became McClain Co. Superintendent of Schools until 1985. Upon retirement he devoted his time to raising cattle and hay while maintaining and improving the Yoakum home place, on Indian Allotment land farmed by his father and grandfather, Martin Miller Yoakum. Preceding him in death were: his parents; his infant daughter, Ellen Jearldene, born on 25 April 1943 and died on 26 April 1943; five siblings, Harold Yoakum, Geneva Wahoma Blackwell, Dennisteen VanWagner Murray, infant twin siblings, a girl, Frankie Vandale and a boy, Bland Dale; his mother-in-law and father-in-law, Hugh and Beulah Whitfield, longtime Rosedale residents, and his niece, Gayle Yoakum Dyer. Survivors include: his devoted, beloved wife of 77 years, Hazel; three children, Jane Evans and her husband, Doug, of Edmond, OK, Donna Giauque and her husband, Scott, of Plano, TX, and Denny Yoakum and his wife Donna of Commerce, TX. Also surviving are: six grandchildren, Eden Moore, Cameron Menghini, Kyle Giauque, Geoffrey Giauque, Catherine Pineda and Caitlin Yoakum; Eleven great-grandchildren: Whitney, Maddie and Ainsley Moore; Frankie, Henry and Samantha Menghini; Mary Kate, Travis and Harley Giauque; Jack Roman and Hazel Jo Pineda; brothers-in-law, H.T. (Dessie Lee) and Max Whitfield; one niece and four nephews. He had been a member and Sunday school teacher of the Purcell First Baptist Church since 1955 and supported various educational, civic and military organizations.

Services will be 10:00 A.M., Friday, June 7, 2019 .at Wilson-Little Funeral Home Chapel, Purcell, OK. Burial will follow at Paoli Cemetery, Paoli, OK. The family expresses deepest appreciation to the Memory Care Unit E staff at the Norman VA Center for their loving care and the Rev. Wayne Brown for his visitations. You may send online condolences to the family @wilsonlittle.com

In lieu of flowers donations may be made in his name to the Dale K. Graham Veterans Foundation, 1268 North Interstate Drive, Norman, OK, 73070.