



Elton Smith Jr.

July 23, 1938 - May 3, 2025

In Loving Memory of Elton “Bubba” Smith Jr.

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Our brilliant and charming father, Elton Smith Jr., took his leave from this Earth on May 3, 2025. Most affectionately known as “Bubba” by those who knew and loved him, he answered to many monikers over the years: “Bub,” “Bubba Lee,” “Schmidlapp,” “Buzz,” and “Big Papa,” just to name a few. As was his habit on all important occasions and family holidays, Bubba exited the room quietly and at his leisure one final time—during the Kentucky Derby—leaving his family once again to ask, “Where is Dad?” And though we will miss him fiercely, we take comfort knowing he arrived at the Pearly Gates in his crusty ball cap and Dollar Tree sunglasses, likely announcing his presence with something abrupt and efficient like, “You Peter?”

Bubba was born in San Antonio, Texas, on July 23, 1938, to Elton Sr. and Marion Smith. Even as a young boy, he displayed high intelligence and an independent spirit. By the age of six, he was riding the bus alone into downtown San Antonio to spend his summer days at the YMCA. He attended Jefferson High School, where he raised hell with his beloved band of football buddies, proudly calling themselves “The Playboys”—a brotherhood that endured a lifetime.

He served in the Aggie Corps of Cadets in hopes of becoming a pilot like his late father. That dream was grounded when he discovered he was colorblind—an unfortunate condition for a would-be pilot, and, as it turns out, for a driver who occasionally had to ask passengers what color the stoplight was. With that, he transferred to his beloved alma mater, The University of Texas at Austin (Hook 'Em!) and earned a degree in Mechanical Engineering. Ironically, even with his engineering prowess, he never could quite master opening a bag of Fritos without using a knife.

Fresh out of school, Bubba went to work for Schlumberger as an offshore engineer—a path that led to a long and rewarding career in petroleum engineering and consulting. The king of the side quest, he also owned and operated several businesses over the years, including Go-Energy, Diamonds and Gems, and Lakeview Builders. While creative company branding may not have been his strong suit, business savvy certainly was.

Using his off-brand, one-of-a-kind humor, he charmed the love of his life, Betty, over the rig crew radio waves. They married in August of 1967, each bringing three young children into what became a wonderfully chaotic and adventurous blended family. Life with six little hellions took them across small towns in Texas and Louisiana, before eventually settling in Boerne, Texas. There, after delivering one of his infamous father-son lectures on “responsible relations with females,” he was blessed with a surprise baby girl in 1979. This prompted yet another lecture—this time on “leaving your hormonal 36-year-old mother alone!” Coincidentally, this is also when Bubba’s thick brown locks began turning very, very gray. There is still a conjecture as to whether one, specific child caused this or if it was a collective effort.

Bubba leaves behind his lovely wife, Betty Smith, seven (fairly) well-adjusted children -Holly Smith Tindel, Jess Hawkins, Coy Smith, Tim Hawkins, Joe Smith, Kris Hawkins Dollarhide and Karli Smith Sims-a herd of (mostly)

millennial grandchildren, and a small but militant gang of great-grandchildren.

He was an amazing father who taught all his children the value of hard work and perseverance. He planned epic family vacations (if a golf course or a fishing spot was nearby) and relished the joy of his kids and grandkids gathered around the pool, the grill, or his cherished “Binford 3000” fish fryer. He never missed a game, a school play, a swim meet, or dance recital—and only caused mild psychological trauma to those he taught how to drive or learn algebra. He also enjoyed spirited ideological debates—from the origins of rocks in a field to his opinion on global warming.

Though he will be deeply missed as a husband and father, it’s his role as grandfather—Big Papa—that will leave the biggest hole. He took this job seriously, delighting in teaching his grandkids how to fish, drive the boat, and cause just enough mischief to make memories. Treats and surprises were his love language: suckers in the glovebox, dollars hidden in his office, and a secret stash of Oreos to sneak before dinner. He was a master of tickling and the reigning world champion of every child’s favorite game: “Stop Hitting Yourself.”

Bubba’s candid humor made him fast friends with anyone who crossed his path. His mix of confidence and good-natured ribbing often led to a beer and lifelong friendship—whereas, for most anyone else, it probably would’ve led to a punch in the face. He was popular at nearly every local business and restaurant, where it was common for more than one person to greet him with a “Hey Bub!” Legend has it that even a Schlumberger employee visiting a bar in Japan recognized his name instantly.

Bubba is preceded in death by numerous beloved family members and friends. We take comfort in knowing he’s now entertaining them all in Heaven

—as he always was and will now eternally be, the life of the party.

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

— 2 Timothy 4:7

A memorial BBQ and dance for the man, the myth, the legend will be held on
May 25, 2025, at the Sisterdale Dancehall beginning at 3:30 PM

Previous Events

A Celebration of a Life Well Lived

MAY **25**. 3:30 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Sisterdale Dance Hall
1210 Sisterdale
Boerne, TX 78006

Tribute Wall

DS

“ Don Speers purchased the Simply Elegant Spathi
phyllum for the family of Elton Smith Jr..



Don Speers - May 20, 2025 at 02:55 PM

JA

“ Betty, I was saddened to hear that Bubba was no longer here with
you physically but I know his buddies that already entered the
Pearly Gates were elated to be entertained by him once again. My
sympathies on the loss of your beloved husband, however, you
know where he is.

Janet, Thomas King's wife

Janet - May 14, 2025 at 11:29 PM