



## Iola Elaine Sutton Kirby

July 2, 1925 - October 29, 2007

### KIRBY

Iola Elaine Kirby was born near the town of Hext, Texas on July 2, 1925. Her parents were Jim and Emma Sutton. As a child, with her two brothers and three sisters, she worked in the fields alongside her parents to maintain the family farm during the meager years of the Great Depression. Undaunted by the times, however, her cheerful and optimistic nature earned her the nickname “Happy”, and, for her siblings and parents and those that knew her as a child, that name would stick with her forever. After graduating from Menard High School in 1941, she took a job working nights as a telephone operator to pay for college classes, which she attended during the day. But her education and her life, like the lives of so many during the years of World War II, were interrupted for a while, when she was forced to return to the farm and work full time. She went back to school after the war, though, and in 1949 she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Southwest Texas State Teachers College Texas State University. She then embarked upon a long and remarkable career as a public school teacher, a career that would span 5 decades, that would involve as many as ten different school districts across Texas and Arkansas, and that would touch—with her love and tireless dedication—the lives of thousands. Eventually, Mrs. Kirby would hold a teaching position in every grade, first through twelfth. She was a skilled instructor and an exemplary role model, but more than this, she had a

particular compassion for those children who struggled, the underdogs, the less fortunate or less talented ones who often get passed over by the system, and forgotten. For these, she reserved a special kind of patience and energy. Her first job in the teaching profession was in El Dorado, Texas, in 1949, where she taught home economics at El Dorado High School, and it was there that she met and married Joe Ted Kirby. She would be “Coach” Kirby’s wife and friend for 58 years, and it was beneath his anxious and loving heart, and beneath the anxious and loving hearts of their three children, Craig, Gus, and Laura Ann that she passed away at home, in San Antonio, at 6:42 PM on October 29, 2007. She was 82 years old. In addition to her husband and three children, she will continue to live in the minds of her grandchildren, Clint, Sarah, and Rebekah Blanchard, and Jason, T.J., Chad, Mitch, Betsy, and Chip Linahan; her daughter-in-law, Anne Linahan Kirby; her brother, J.W. Sutton; her sisters, Madlyn Mason and Willie Puryear; and her countless friends and relations, including her special Christian family of friends at Sunset Ridge Church of Christ in San Antonio. Visitation will be held on Sunday-November 4, 2007 from 6:00PM until 8:00PM at Mission Park Funeral Chapels North. A Memorial Service will be held for her at 12:00Noon, Monday, November 5, 2007, at the funeral home chapel, and she will be laid to rest at Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery. She will be remembered as a sweet and beautiful person, a gentle soul, and a good Christian, who believed in the words of Jesus and lived by them. Until the end, she was “Happy”. And she made others happy. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to a charity of your choice.

You may sign the on-line guestbook at [www.missionparks.com](http://www.missionparks.com) under the obituary section.

MISSION PARK NORTH  
3401 CHERRY RIDGE  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78230

210 349-1414

# Tribute Wall

JB

“ *Iola Elaine Sutton Kirby*

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**Jeffrey S. Binns** - November 17, 2007 at 12:00 AM

VD

“ *Dear Laura Ann and Family,*

*I don't know if you remember me or not, but we were friends in elementary school in Kermit. My name was Valerie Dick then.*

*I just read about your mother and wanted you to know I was thinking of you and your family.*

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**Valerie Duncan** - November 13, 2007 at 12:00 AM

PS

“ *Mrs. Kirby was truly a dedicated, professional teacher. I worked with her at Lohn School and really appreciated her. She also taught my son Scott in the first grade and gave him a very good foundation for his schooling. My condolences to the family.*

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**Patty E. Smith** - November 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM

AC

“ *Coach Kirby,*  
*Hey, you and I have lost a great friend but I know that we can ponder on the great memories that we shared with "Mrs Kirby". My visits with ya'll in San Antonio and on the telephone will always remain dear in my heart. Sharyn and I will miss*

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**Arnold Carrasco** - November 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM

KS

“ Ted, I have very fond memories of teaching with you and lola at Kermit Junior High. I was so sorry to learn of her passing from this life, but I'm comforted by the knowledge that we will meet again in heaven one of these days. God bless you and comfort

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**Karen Shook Sheppard** - November 05, 2007 at 12:00 AM

GS

“ Coach Kirby,  
Sorry to read of you loss. When I think of growing up in Kermit and attending Jr High School, one of the first names you think about were the Kirby's. It was a priviledge to be taught by both you and your wife. My thoughts and prayers go o

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**Gary Speed** - November 05, 2007 at 12:00 AM

AB

“ Our Sincere Sympathy. My favorite cousin, I will miss your Happy outlook.

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**Anna Lucy and Len Brown** - November 05, 2007 at 12:00 AM

MG

“ We were sorry to hear of lola's passing. She has been in and will remain in our prayers.

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**Michael and Marlyn Gehri** - November 05, 2007 at 12:00 AM

AM

“ Our sympathy to each of you in your loss. Hugs, Al and Bobbye

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**Al & Bobbye Machen** - November 05, 2007 at 12:00 AM

TM

“ Dear Craig,  
We were sorry to hear of your loss. May your mom's faith bring strength to you and your family and may your memories become ever more vibrant. I am glad I got to meet her and help her through her tax issues. I knew from our visits that sh

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**Tom & Janie Mikesell** - November 05, 2007 at 12:00 AM

LR

“ I am very sorry about your loss. I understand. You have always been special to my famly and I know that you will miss her. She was a special lady and Christian. She is resting and happy in the arms of Jesus. You all are in our prayers. When ya'll li

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**Linda Jones Reeves** - November 04, 2007 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ Ted and Family,  
Our condolences to on the loss of lola. She was a dedicated teacher and a great person.

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**JD and Karen Stocks** - November 04, 2007 at 12:00 AM

MH

“ My deceased husband, Truman Joe Biggs, and I shared many fond memories of times spent with lola and Ted. The Eldorado football reunions stand out. lola was a special lady. Our sincere condolences and with you.

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**Marty Biggs Hinson** - November 04, 2007 at 12:00 AM

JA

“ *My Aunt lola was a very special lady! She loved and treasured her family and friends. We have many wonderful memories of visits with her, Uncle Ted, and my cousins.*

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**Janice** - November 04, 2007 at 12:00 AM

DE

“ *Ted, Craig, Gus, Laura Anne,*

*lola, much like you Coach Kirby, was an inspiration to us all. I never once saw her angry, even when Gus and I sneaked onto the roof of the house on Oak Street and she caught us as we were jumping off. Craig, I guess you*

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**Dan Evans** - November 04, 2007 at 12:00 AM

CT

“ *We are so sorry. Many Kermit memories. She was such a beautiful person.*

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**Coach-Barbara Turner** - November 04, 2007 at 12:00 AM

NS

“ *The last time we were in San Antonio lola was in pain but doing quite well so we are quite surprised to hear about her death. We have no doubt that the angels have escorted her to the very presence of God where she is in no pain and loving her relationshi*

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**Nancy and Jerry Simpson** - November 04, 2007 at 12:00 AM

CB

“ Our hearts and prayers are with you all as you remember your sweet wife and Mother. Ted, you and Lola had a great impact on our life and we love you both. We will pray that God gives you and your family his precious peace, the one that "passes your under

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**Charles & Sylvia Brewster** - November 04, 2007 at 12:00 AM

BY

“ Coach Kirby, I want to extend my condolences to you and your family.

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**Billy Young** - November 04, 2007 at 12:00 AM

VF

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

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**van fuschak** - November 03, 2007 at 12:00 AM

RY

“ Prayers are with you.

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**Ronnie Young** - November 02, 2007 at 12:00 AM

PW

“ Craig and family,

*I am so sorry for your loss.*

*At the same time, I rejoice for your mother who has escaped her suffering and entered her new life where there will never be pain or illness.*

*Sincerely,  
Pat Weaver*

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**Pat Weaver** - November 02, 2007 at 12:00 AM