

MICHAEL JARRETT: REVERED BUSINESS & CIVIC LEADER

Members of the Arlington ISD Education Foundation will pay tribute to the late Michael Jarrett at the organization's DreamMakers Banquet at 6 p.m. on Feb. 28 at the Tarrant County College Southeast Campus. Jarrett, President of Worthington National Bank and a member of the Foundation board, died in a single-car accident on Dec. 2. He was 72.

As news of his passing spread, friends and business leaders throughout Arlington rallied with Foundation members to find ways to celebrate Mike's life, which touched many



Michael Jarrett during a special moment with his family

professional, civic and personal realms. The DreamMakers Banquet was deemed to be an ideal setting to salute a man who so enthusiastically supported local education. He served on multiple committees and held several titles with the Foundation, including Board President and Vice President of Finance.

Michael especially loved that the Foundation assists teachers through grants that help them implement

innovative curriculum ideas to enhance their success in teaching enrolled students. When asked which grants are most meaningful to him, he replied, "Any grants associated with libraries and assisting students in learning to read. I consider learning to read, and to read well, as a basic building block for future success in the classroom and life."

Michael grew up in the east side of Fort Worth, was married for 48 years to Teresa and had two daughters (Lesley Hagan and Melanie Jarrett) and two grandchildren (Jarrett and Hayley Hagan). He earned his BBA degree from University of Texas at Arlington and an MBA from SMU. He was a Graduate of Texas Tech School of Banking and a Graduate of Southwestern Graduate School of Banking at SMU. Michael was President of the Arlington Market for Worthington National Bank.

He was heavily active in the community, participating in various leadership roles for area non-profits, including the Greater Arlington Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Arlington Management Corporation, Arlington Advisory Council for The Salvation Army, Arlington Downtown Rotary Club, Theatre Arlington, and Arlington YMCA.

As those accomplishments would suggest, Michael was enthusiastically altruistic, so much so that his life became a model for others. In fact, during the eulogy his daughter Melanie presented at the service celebrating his life, she encouraged others "to be like Mike" by loving hard, valuing your family above all else, and being content.

"He just never missed anything," Lesley Hagan said in a tribute to Michael that appeared in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. "I don't know how he made time for everything he did, but he never missed anything."

"Mike was the living embodiment of a game-changer," added Greg Morse, CEO of Worthington National Bank. "We were able to learn from him over the 10 years we were fortunate enough to work with him. Being in banking for 51 years allowed him to share with us his knowledge. Our bank family, including our customers, will miss him and his God-given talents."

Greater Arlington Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Michael Jacobson added yet another salute: "Just as a father, as a businessman and as a community leader, he left a lasting legacy that we're all proud of, and it points to a life well lived." [A](#)

JIM WAGNON: THE 'ENGINEER'S ENGINEER'

The City of Arlington and the local engineering community lost a legend with the recent passing of Jim Wagnon, longtime owner of the Arlington-based engineering firm, Graham Associates, Inc.

Jim Wagnon was often referred to as the



Jim Wagnon

"Engineer's Engineer" who loved to perform civil engineering design and solve difficult problems. He began his career in Oregon, where he owned his own consulting firm.

In 1984, he was recruited

to join Arlington-based Graham Associates, Inc., a civil engineering and surveying firm.

He was a remarkable engineer and grabbed the attention of Jack Graham, the owner of Graham Associates, who sold the firm to Jim upon the former's retirement in 1988.

Jim performed the civil engineering design on many projects in North Texas, beginning with Lakepointe Development and over 3,000 acres in Lewisville. He designed countless city thoroughfares, including North Cooper Street and Northwest Green Oaks Boulevard in Arlington, among others. He loved designing road grades, it was like a hobby for him. Two of his favorite projects were landmark projects: the Ballpark in Arlington and Viridian here in Arlington.

Jim loved to mentor and teach his young engineers. One of those was Jeff Williams, to whom Jim eventually sold the firm. Jeff stated, "Jim made a tremendous impact on my life, teaching me important engineering and life lessons. In addition to Jim's engineering expertise, I was always impressed with how much Jim loved his family and they loved him. He also had a passion for helping people in their time of need. He will be greatly missed. Jim has left a rich legacy!"

Jim's wife Teresa has invested decades of community service in a number of Arlington non-profits. Jim often provided assistance, following Teresa's directions putting on major charity events such as Silver Spurs. They were quite a team, and Jim loved her very much!

Jim was also very committed to supporting Mission Arlington, notably the wrestling program for the youth of Mission Arlington started by Viridian General Manager Robert Kembel. [A](#)