



Roger Hugh Bedford Jr.

July 2, 1956 - October 11, 2023

Roger H. Bedford, Jr., 67, passed away on October 11, 2023 in Tuscaloosa following a recent illness. Born July 2, 1956 to Roger H. Bedford, Sr. and Jane Bonds Bedford, Roger graduated high school from Columbia Military Academy in Columbia, TN. He graduated from the University of Alabama with a B.A. in political science with a minor in history in 1978. While at Alabama, Roger was initiated into the Alpha Beta Chapter of the Kappa Alpha Order and is counted among the Chapter's Distinguished Alumni. Roger graduated from Cumberland School of Law at Samford University in 1981, moving home to Russellville and beginning a career in law and politics that would span over four decades.

Roger began his legal career practicing with his father, uncle, and cousin in the Russellville firm that became Bedford, Rogers, and Bowling P.C. Roger was a trial lawyer. Like his law partners, he prided himself on being a "country lawyer," representing his friends and neighbors in their times of need. Later in his career, Roger served as the Municipal Court Judge in both Russellville and Hackleburg.

Roger and his late wife, Maudie, prioritized family and service. They opened their home for celebrations large and small, always believing in the power of connection and community. Together, they chased sunsets from coast to coast. They enjoyed fine meals with dear friends in restaurants all over the world and around their own table, skillfully prepared by Maudie. For Roger and Maudie, there was no better place to be than Bryant-Denny Stadium on a

Saturday night cheering on their beloved Crimson Tide with their son, Roge, who is the cherished center of their lives. They were both fiercely proud of Roge and all he has accomplished, most recently his position on Coach Nick Saban's staff.

An accomplished outdoorsman and committed conservationist, Roger instilled a love of the outdoors in Roge. They spent many happy times hunting and fishing together, including deep sea fishing in the Gulf, deer and turkey hunting in Wilcox County and Troy, salmon and trout fishing in Alaska, and shooting birds across Alabama. Roger was a lifetime member of Ducks Unlimited, the National Rifle Association, and the Cattlemen's Association. Roger was a Rotarian and an executive member of the Boys Scouts of America and the Tennessee Valley Council. He served as an executive committee member of the Alabama Law Institute and on the Alabama State Bar's Board of Bar Commissioners representing the 34th Judicial Circuit. When they made their home in Russellville, Maudie and Roger were active members of First Baptist Church, where Roger was a deacon. Roger loved his labs Max and Bruni, rescue dog Bear, University of Alabama athletics, prime steaks cooked rare, homegrown tomatoes, and seeing Maudie's roses in bloom.

In 1982, Roger was the youngest person ever elected to the Alabama State Senate at the age of 25. Roger went on to bring economic development, vital programs, and essential funding to District 2 and then District 6 for over 20 years. Dynamic and determined, Roger championed public education, workforce development, and progressive infrastructure projects. Roger was the hardest-working man in Alabama politics. He was fearless in advocating for the needs of his district, which was marked with blue and yellow billboards announcing to entering drivers that "This is Bedford Country." Maudie was Roger's closest ally and staunchest supporter. Together, they worked to make Alabama better. With Roger as their state senator, the people of Northwest Alabama were well represented in Montgomery by a lawyer-legislator who worked tirelessly to ensure their voices were heard. His success in delivering

grants and services to his district resulted in well-deserved accolades, including being named “Legislator of the Year” by the Fraternal Order of Police, Probate Judges Association, Alabama Resource Conservation & Development Councils, Alabama Nurses Association, Alabama State Employees Association, Alabama Association of Conservation Districts, and Discovering Alabama. Roger served in the Alabama Senate as Judiciary Chairman (1995-1998), Finance and Taxation General Fund Chairman (1999-2002, 2004-2005, 2007-2009), Energy and Natural Resources Chairman (2009-2010), and Minority Leader (2011-2013). Although Roger formally stepped away from political life in 2014, he continued to serve as advisor and trusted confidant to candidates, business leaders, and elected officials throughout the next decade.

His strong-willed nature and sheer force of determination served him well. Roger endured an astonishing number of earthly challenges and turned them into lasting legacies. After a bone-shattering three-wheeler accident left him in a halo brace, friends and family knew he and Maudie were destined for marriage by the loving way she cared for him. A multi-decade survivor of non-Hodgkin lymphoma, Roger used the lessons he learned as a patient at M.D. Anderson to advocate for and support innumerable Alabamians who walked the same path. After Maudie battled breast cancer, one of Roger’s top legislative priorities was to sponsor bills to educate breast cancer patients about their treatment options. Passed unanimously with bi-partisan sponsorship, Alabama’s Breast Cancer Patient Education Act went into effect on August 1, 2013 and remains a lasting part of Roger’s legislative legacy. Roger faced each of life’s challenges with the support of his family and friends, a strong belief in prayer, and trust in God and His saving grace. In addition to his son Roge, adored nieces, nephews, grandnieces, and grandnephews, and a host of colleagues, constituents, and friends, Roger is survived by his brother John Lawson Bedford (Julia), sister Helen Bedford Roberson, niece Audrey Bedford Ogilvie (Morgan), nephew Evan Lawson

Bedford, and stepmother Betty Hall Bedford. Roger was predeceased by his cherished wife Maudie, his parents, brother Robert E. Bedford, and brother-in-law William "Bill" Roberson. Funeral services will be held at First Baptist Church (213 N. Jackson Ave., Russellville) on Sunday, October 15 at 4:00 p.m. Visitation will begin at 12:30 p.m. at the church. A family burial and interment will follow. Pallbearers include Kenny Crow, Paul Roberts, Bill Lester, Steve Windom, David Marsh, Pat Harris, Mike Cole, and Jeff Miller, with multiple honorary pallbearers.

Pinkard Funeral Home, Russellville, is assisting the family.

Previous Events

Funeral

OCT 15. 4:00 AM (CT)

First Baptist Church Russellville
213 North Jackson Ave.
Russellville, AL 35653

Visitation

OCT 15. 12:30 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church Russellville
213 North Jackson Ave.
Russellville, AL 35653

Tribute Wall

CS

“ So sorry for the loss of Mr. Bedford.. We enjoyed talking with him on the phone when he would call in to pay/check on his insurance. I had just talked with him a couple of weeks ago. So sad.....Callie Stewart, Agent, Joy Morris, Customer Service, Jon Peters Insurance Agency INC.... Athens, Alabama... He is now with our friend/co-worker Tom McAlister, hopefully those two will behave being long time friends from Russellville Al. He is now also with his best friend Maudie.. RIP

Callie Stewart - October 17, 2023 at 05:10 PM

JP

“ Roger was a great friend. He showed support to us firefighter at Tharptown Vol. Fire Dept. He will be missed.
From Janice and Terry Pennington.

Janice & Terry Pennington - October 15, 2023 at 09:47 PM

M1

“ Martha (class of 1974) lit a candle in memory of Roger Bedford



Martha McGuire (class of 1974) - October 15, 2023 at 04:39 PM

DK

“ Donna king lit a candle in memory of Roger Bedford



Donna king - October 14, 2023 at 08:38 PM

CB

“ Deepest Sympathy to this family. Senator Bedford was a great and wonderful man always doing and helping others. My days go back to Roger's start of his political career. My daddy (the late Mahugh Porter was huge in helping Roger with that start.). Roge your dad and mom were so proud of you. Prayers and peace. Cyndy Porter Bartlett



Cyndy Bartlett - October 14, 2023 at 09:14 AM

KH

“ Roger was a dear friend to all! He was always supportive of my classroom and my students! He was a very caring individual and supportive during the passing of my dad, Reece Horton. Roger has always been a part of the class of 1974. You are now enjoying our Lord and Savior with Maudie! Rest in Peace
Dr. Kay Hargett
Class of 1974
Russellville High School

Kay Hargett - October 13, 2023 at 10:41 PM

NC

“ From 3rd grade through 8th if I got in trouble Roger was usually involved, like hopping on train behind Homer Oliver’s gas station to ride to town because no one would take us, or when we upset the cows at the Sale Barn with firecrackers. But one of the best was when he just came flying through our house yelling I can’t talk , out the back door and I suppose home. Didn’t know what was happening until a few minutes later when the truck driver showed up at our house wanting to know if we knew anything about someone throwing eggs at his truck. After he left to go to CMA his dad took Chris Franks and me up to see him one weekend but we didn’t get to see him much because Roger was having to March off demerits he had accumulated. We weren’t always bad , but those times just aren’t as memorable. And finally thanks to whoever was growing the watermelons in Hester Heights the summer of 68 or 69, we gave away a lot watermelons that summer.

Niles Cooper - October 13, 2023 at 08:42 PM

RF

“ Roger was one of my closest friends in middle school! We were voted flirtiest in our class! Big Rog and my mother Rena Yarbrough Doty grew up together . I have followed Rogers career in politics for many years. The last time I saw him was at our last high school reunion and we all marveled at the new field house he was instrumental in getting built. After sweet Maudie died , I sent him a note and he responded to me . I know that loss was so devastating for him and the entire family. I was so looking forward to connecting with him again next year at our 59 th reunion. I am so sad for his son and Hi. Roger had a personality as big as the sky. Rest in peace with Maudi dear friend!

Rena Doty Fraser - October 13, 2023 at 01:36 PM



“ *My deepest condolences and sympathies to Roger III.*

Roger was a great state senator and a good friend!!

Rest in peace!!!



Tony BrakeField - October 13, 2023 at 09:44 AM



“ *Roger and Maude..an inspiration to us all. Rest in peace in your heavenly home.*

Jane Keeton McManus

Jane Keeton Mc Manus - October 12, 2023 at 10:47 PM



“ *So sorry for your loss,*



Sam Heath - October 12, 2023 at 10:04 PM