

J. B. and Ramona Roberts

J. B. and Ramona Roberts have been deeply involved in Plainview's civic, economic, cultural, and religious life for more than half a century.

J. B. Roberts was born in 1929 in Quanah. After his family moved to Plainview, J. B. was a member of the high school band and the 1945 Bulldog football team ranked ninth in the state. He earned his pilot's license at age 16. He graduated from Plainview High in 1947 and Baylor University in 1950, then worked for an insurance company in Minneapolis.

Ramona Faye Curry was born in Plainview in 1929 to Sam and Faye Curry (also in the Centennial Circle of Honor). She played in the band and graduated from Plainview High in 1947, from the Hockaday School in Dallas in 1949, and Southern Methodist University in 1951. In 1951 she married J. B. Roberts in Plainview. They have three children, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

From 1952 to 1953 J. B. served in the Air Force's Office of Special Investigations in Washington, D.C. He was in the Air Force Reserve for 16 years, retiring with the rank of major.

Back in Plainview, J. B. became an insurance agent and realtor, and he also founded a construction company. In the early 1960s his company built the Wayland Shopping Center on Fifth Street, now part of the Gabriel-Wayland Center.

J. B. was a deacon in the First Baptist Church, where both Ramona and he taught Sunday School for many years. Ramona was active in the Junior Service League and the Gamma Delphin Study Club. Ramona and J. B. were members of the Daughters (and Sons) of the American Revolution, Daughters (and Sons) of the Republic of Texas, and Descendants of the Defenders of the Alamo.

In the early 1980s J. B. was active in the campaign to build the dams upstream on Running Water Draw that shield Plainview from floods. He was a charter member of the Plainview-Hale County Industrial Foundation and on the committee that helped bring the Wal-Mart distribution center here in 1985, handling the land deal as a realtor without commission. He sat on the boards of Wayland Baptist University (serving as chairman from 1988 to 1990), the Plainview Cemetery Association, Hale County Airport, Covenant Hospital, and the Hawaii Baptist Academy.

Among Ramona's many activities were P.E.O., the Plains Art Association, the 1976 Plainview Bicentennial Committee, and the building committee for the Llano Estacado Museum. She is a charter member and former chair of the Hale County Historical Commission. In 1976 she was named Plainview's Woman of the Year and was honored with a show of her art at the Llano Estacado Museum.

In 1998 J. B. founded Hunger Plus, a nonprofit humanitarian organization that has sent food to every continent but Antarctica. He has served as its board chairman and has traveled widely to spread its message. He has received the highest awards given by Rotary International and the Rotary Foundation as well as the 2006 Texas Leadership Award for outstanding local leaders from the John Ben Sheppard Public Institute in Austin.

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