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## THE FLIGHT OF A LIFETIME

### Tumbleweed Smith



It was thrilling. Exciting. Exhilarating. Dangerous. Took courage to do it. I can't recall doing anything that included fear, anticipation, trepidation, and a sense of accomplishment afterwards. I'm talking about floating on air. Riding the wind. I was in El Paso at a place called I FLY that offers simulated indoor parachute jumps.

#### Tumbleweed Smith

I never had a desire to jump out of a plane in mid-air, but this intrigued me. I saw a commercial for I FLY while on a trip and was fascinated by it. When my wife asked me what I wanted for my next birthday I said I'd like to do the I FLY thing. The company has been around for more than 25 years and is in major cities. It looked fun and I expected something like a ride at Six Flags. Au contraire. It is much more.

Inside the building is a big glass tube two stories high and 8 feet wide. Huge fans send a column of air upwards at 100 miles an hour. I met a man named Connor who helped me get ready. He showed me hand signals to use during the flight. I put on a flight suit and helmet and stepped to the edge of the chamber of air. Connor, who was with me during the flight, told me to just hold my hands in the air and fall straight down into the rushing column of air. I did that and was immediately in the strongest wind I have ever experienced. I could feel my jaws bouncing. A few seconds into the flight I wasn't sure I had done the right thing and considered giving the thumbs down hand signal to quit the flight. But I said I'm going to do this and settled down. I was horizontal in the air. What a feeling. Good thing I had my dentures securely glued in. I flew with arms and legs extended and flew like Superman. We went up high in the chamber, turning around in the air. What a feeling. I was glad when the flight ended and was once again on solid ground.

Connor asked me if I was OK and I said yes. He asked me if I wanted to go again and I said yes. This time Connor didn't hover over me as much and at one time I was flying by myself. I felt so much more confident than I did on the first flight. I saw Susan outside the glass taking videos and I smiled at her, with jaws flapping.

When the second flight ended, I sat down on a small bleacher just outside the column of air. Connor pulled a safety strap which meant no entry. Then he stepped into the column of air and did a demonstration of what an experienced wind rider could do. It was probably the most exciting and interesting thing I've ever seen. He shot up in the air like a rocket, turning over and twisting in the air, coming down and going up doing all sorts of gyrations. Just seeing his demonstration was worth the price of admission.

As I was taking off my flight suit my body felt like it had been pummeled. Well, it had. By a wind of 100 miles an hour. It took a couple of hours for that feeling to go away. I've been in some exciting situations in my life but none to match my ride with I FLY. I may never do it again but the memory of those two flights will be with me for a long time. I did something not everybody has done.

### Miscellaneous

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P	G	T	H	S	S	M	A	L	L	F	O	R	W	A	R	D	J
U	N	T	T	O	N	H	E	I	R	N	B	T	M	V	E	E	W
Y	I	D	R	H	O	O	N	G	C	E	U	E	T	I	R	S	O
A	S	R	O	U	R	P	I	O	N	O	B	S	N	S	R	L	R
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E	P	G	O	I	H	O	I	P	R	T	F	B	G	N	D	D	E
Y	B	G	F	N	R	T	V	E	O	A	I	N	B	R	D	U	E
A	T	N	B	T	S	E	B	E	S	I	I	T	A	I	M	N	R
L	S	I	O	S	K	O	T	N	R	L	N	W	S	A	R	K	F
P	I	T	U	E	A	T	E	R	E	T	R	T	E	B	B	D	S
B	S	O	N	R	A	A	T	V	A	O	I	T	E	L	U	H	L
L	S	O	D	W	K	E	A	A	F	U	S	M	J	R	O	S	A
O	A	H	S	E	K	R	F	R	M	E	Q	R	E	T	N	E	C
C	L	S	R	S	T	O	E	B	A	C	K	B	O	A	R	D	S
K	L	S	A	N	U	W	G	A	M	E	M	I	T	F	L	A	H
A	A	B	C	L	O	C	K	I	R	E	F	E	R	E	E	S	M
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FOUL  
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JERSEY  
LAY-UP  
NET  
OUT OF  
BOUNDS

PASSING  
PLAYER  
POINT GUARD  
POINTS  
POWER FORWARD  
QUARTER  
REBOUND  
REFEREE  
RIM  
SCOREBOARD

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## Navigating Grief After the Kerrville Flash Floods: Healing Together as a Community

By Gabriela Camacho, BSN, RN-BC

When disaster strikes, it doesn't just damage buildings—it impacts hearts, homes, and the very fabric of a community. The recent flash floods in Kerrville have left a lasting mark on our town. While the water has receded, many residents are still wading through waves of grief, loss, and emotional shock.

Grief after a natural disaster is often overlooked. Unlike the loss of a loved one, which society more readily acknowledges, the emotional toll of losing a home, possessions, livelihood—or even a sense of safety—can be just as profound. In Kerrville, families have experienced dislocation, fear, and the heavy weight of starting over. It's important to understand that grief in these circumstances is valid, natural, and necessary.

Grief doesn't follow a straight path. After a disaster, people may cycle through emotions like denial, anger, guilt, sadness, and even relief—sometimes all in the same day. You may feel overwhelmed by simple tasks or find yourself triggered by a sudden rainfall or emergency siren. These responses are not weaknesses; they are human reactions to trauma.

Children are especially vulnerable. They may not have the words to express what they're feeling, but changes in behavior—clinginess, trouble sleeping, withdrawal—can be signs they are processing loss. Creating space for open dialogue, reassurance, and routine can help them regain a sense of security.

As a community, Kerrville is known for its strength and neighborly spirit. In times of crisis, we check on each other, cook meals, and roll up our sleeves. But we also need to give ourselves permission to grieve and to lean on one another not just for physical help—but for emotional support. Grief shared is grief lightened.

There are steps we can take to support healing, both individually and collectively:

- ★ Acknowledge the loss — Whether it's a home, a pet, or a sense of normalcy, naming what was lost is the first step toward healing.
- ★ Talk about it — Conversations with neighbors, friends, or counselors can provide clarity, release, and validation.
- ★ Stay connected — Isolation can intensify grief. Attend local gatherings, faith-based services, or community support groups.
- ★ Be patient — Grief has no timeline. Everyone heals at their own pace.
- ★ Seek help when needed — Professional counselors, clergy, and wellness practitioners are available. Reaching out is a sign of strength, not defeat.

In the wake of the Kerrville floods, we are rebuilding more than roads and homes—we are restoring hope, resilience, and community. If you or someone you love is struggling with grief, don't carry it alone. We are in this together. Let's continue to offer kindness, lend listening ears, and remind one another that healing is not only possible—it's already happening, one conversation at a time.



Gabriela Camacho



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ESTATE OF: *Richard Trey Thompson*

OWNERS: *Richard & Edna Thompson*

**Auctioneer's Note:** Richard Trey was in the construction and sawmill business before he passed away. His family is auctioning his collection of tools and equipment. If you're looking for some tools or equipment - you don't miss this auction! Follow us on Facebook for updates or visit our website for pictures at [www.chuppsauction.com](http://www.chuppsauction.com)

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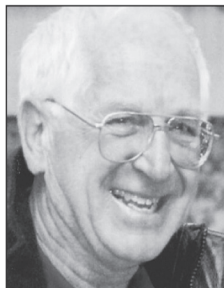
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### **Jim Westbrook** October 20, 1944 — July 5, 2025

Graveside service for Jim Westbrook, age 80, of Sulphur Springs, Texas will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, July 10, 2025 at Fairview Cemetery in Clarksville, Texas. Visitation will be held from 6:00-8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 9, 2025 at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home in Sulphur Springs. Mr. Westbrook passed away at his home on Saturday, July 5, 2025.

Jim is survived by his wife, Connie Westbrook of Sulphur Springs, Texas; son, Jayme Westbrook (Lauren) of Pittsburg, Texas; daughter, Jennifer Cooper (Jeff) of Lake Worth, Texas; stepdaughter, Lauren Lane of Sulphur Springs, Texas; grandchildren, Jamison Westbrook Koch, Benjamin Westbrook Koch, Elliott Ashlock, Lorelei Ashlock, Sawyer Cooper (Lacey), Scout Cooper (Jamie), and Savannah Rotolo (Zach); and mother-in-law, Durann Ardis of Sulphur Springs, Texas.

He was preceded in death by his parents, James and Hazel Westbrook; and sisters, Marleah Drew and Kathy Schrader.



### **Patsy Jo Darlin (Bunch)** July 14, 1939 — July 5, 2025

A graveside service for Patsy Jo Darlin (Bunch), age 85, of Sulphur Springs, Texas, was held at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, July 8, 2025, at Brashear Cemetery with Rev. Jon Nesbitt officiating. Visitation was held from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Monday, July 7, 2025, at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home. Mrs. Darlin passed away at Christus Trinity Mother Frances Hospital in Tyler, Texas, on Saturday, July 5, 2025.

Patsy Jo Darlin was born on July 14, 1939, in Brashear, Texas, to James Robert and Julie Allie (Payne) Bunch. She worked as a dog groomer and will be missed by all who knew her.

Patsy is survived by her daughters, Kay Bridges and husband, Lynn of Angleton, Texas, Suzy Darlin of Sulphur Springs, Texas, Brenda Kay Thomas of Sulphur Springs, Texas, Debbie Darlin of Sulphur Springs, Texas; sons; Ricky Denson of Cumby, Texas, Trozy Darlin Jr. and wife, Marilyn of Killeen, Texas, Larry Darlin and wife, Darlene of Willis, Texas; grandchildren, Nicole Bridges, Amanda Valentine, Ashley Scroggins, and an additional fifteen more grandchildren; numerous great-grandchildren; and sister, Bobbee Bunch

Bell of McKinney, Texas. She was preceded in death by her parents, James and Julie Bunch; brothers, James R. Bunch, Billy Bunch, and Charles Bunch; and sister, Lola Stephenson.



### **Marvin Andrew Gregory** October 12, 1938 — July 4, 2025

Marvin Andrew Gregory was born on October 12, 1938, in Sulphur Springs, Texas, to Judson Andrew and Gladys (Williams) Gregory. He married Cindy (Pierce) Gregory on December 26, 1989, at Gafford Chapel Methodist Church. He worked as both a dairy and chicken farmer and worked in politics. He was the President of Texas Farmers Union and was on the Texas Agriculture Finance Board. He was a member of the Dairy Farmers Association and the Simmental Association. In 1992, he ran for Texas Agriculture Commissioner. He was a member of the Republican Party.

Marvin is survived by his wife, Cindy Gregory of Sulphur Springs, Texas; son, James Andrew Gregory and wife, Macie Michelle Gregory of Sulphur Springs, Texas; daughter, Ashley Marie Alexander, and husband Robert Alexander Jr. of Sulphur Springs, Texas; grandchildren, William Andrew Gregory, Thomas Andrew Gregory, Catherine Michelle Gregory, Jenna Dobson, Evelyn Wolfe, Amelia Alexander, Robert Alexander III; children from a previous marriage, Beverly McCord, Judd Gregory, and Mark Gregory; sister, Jean Knight of Carrollton, Texas.



### **Dusty Roy Wyatt** June 21, 1980 — June 30, 2025

A celebration of life for Dusty Roy Wyatt, age 45, of Dike, Texas, will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, July 13, 2025, at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home in Sulphur Springs. Jason Cunningham will officiate. Friends and family are invited to gather for visitation one hour prior to the service, beginning at 1:00 p.m.

Dusty's honorary pallbearers will be some of the boys that looked to him as a father figure and a few of his closest friends: Justin Strickland, Colby Erdmier, Emmanuel Chim, BJ Townsend, James Sisk, and Chris Degan. Brothers by bond and by heart.

Dusty was born on June 21, 1980, in Dallas, Texas, to Stephen Roy Wyatt and Patricia Ann McCracken. On a cool September day in 2008 at Crossroads Cafe in Sulphur Springs, Tx he found the love of his life, Amy Nicole Lockett, from serving him his sweet tea it wasn't long after that they built a beautiful life full of love, laughter, and loud engines.

He was the proud owner and operator of Wyatt's Towing, a job that perfectly matched his grit and heart. Whether he was working on a truck, helping someone on the side of the road, or just out for a country drive. Dusty was always in his element when he had a wrench in his hand, the open road ahead or simply just spending time with his family. Dusty had a deep love for hunting, fishing, backroads, truck shows, and being surrounded by family. He was baptized at Rock Hill Baptist Church in Yantis, Texas, grounding his big heart in faith.

More than anything, Dusty was a devoted husband, dad, son, and brother. He leaves behind his beloved wife, Amy Lockett-Wyatt, and their children: Brailey, Bridgette, and Austin, each a living reflection of his strength and spirit. Along with Tim Wisdom Sr, his Father-in-law and best friend.

Dusty is also survived by his siblings, whom he loved fiercely: Steve Wyatt, Amber York, Daniel Wyatt, Shawn Wyatt, Summer Wyatt, Dakota Wyatt and Denver Wyatt, as well as countless nieces, nephews, in-laws, and friends who became family over the years.

He was welcomed into Heaven by his parents Stephen Wyatt and Patricia York; bonus mom, Laura Davis-Wyatt; mother-in-law, Nancy Wisdom; grandfather Delbert Wyatt; grandmother, Ida Faye Woodward; and grandfather, Raymond Carden. We know he's already swapping stories, tuning engines, and giving the best hugs with them now.



# Central Texas Floods July 4th thru July 7th

From July 4 through July 7, 2025, a large and deadly flood event took place in the Texas Hill Country, particularly in Kerr County, in the U.S. state of Texas. During the flooding, water levels along the Guadalupe River rose quickly and significantly when 5–11 inches of rain fell in a short amount of time. As a result, at least 109 fatalities have been confirmed, of which at least 87 are in Kerr County, with at least 23 reported missing. The flooding was caused by a mesoscale convective complex partially fed by the remnants of Tropical Storm Barry.

Flooding began on the morning of July 4, after a huge volume of rain fell on Central Texas. Six flash flood emergencies, which included the cities of Kerrville and Mason, were issued the same day. The Guadalupe River rose about 26 feet in 45 minutes. It surged an estimated 29 feet in the Hunt area, where more than 20 children were declared missing from a summer camp. July 5 saw more flash flood warnings for the Lake Travis area, which is part of the Colorado River (Texas) watershed. On July 6, The New York Times stated, “among all deadly flooding events in the United States, including those caused by levee failures, seasonal rains and hurricanes, the Hill Country floods will most likely rank among the deadliest since 1925”. Central Texas and specifically the Hill Country are prone to major floods. With one of the highest risks for flash flooding in the country, the area is referred to as the flash flood alley, according to the Lower Colorado River Authority. This is caused by a combination of steep hills and arid soil that water tends to run off quickly, funnelling water rapidly into rivers during rainstorms.

The Guadalupe River and surrounding rivers in the region have flooded multiple times in recent decades, often with deadly consequences. This includes flooding in July 1987 that killed 10, flooding in October 1998 that killed 31, flooding in May 2015 on the nearby Blanco River that killed 13, and flooding just 3 weeks earlier in nearby San Antonio that killed 13.

Before the floods, Kerr County lacked a flood warning system. In 2016, the then-sheriff of Kerr County advocated for such a system, including sirens. In 2016, a county commissioner noted that Kerr County was “probably the highest risk area in the state for flooding”. Discussions about funding and constructing a system continued on and off until at least 2021. The current Kerr County judge, Rob Kelly, said that the lack of a warning system was due to its high cost and claimed that residents were resistant to the idea for that reason.

According to CNN, intense rainfall across the United States has greatly intensified in recent years due to global warming, as a warmer atmosphere can hold more moisture. According to Climate Central, San Antonio rainfall intensity has increased by 6% since 1970 while Austin’s has risen by 19%, meaning that more rain is falling in a given hour now than it was decades ago.

Late on July 3, 2025, the remnant mid-level circulation of Atlantic Tropical Storm Barry became embedded within a broader mid-level trough containing tropical east Pacific remnant moisture. This system developed into thunderstorms which stalled over Central Texas, causing heavy rains that led to deadly flooding in that region on July 4–7, especially along the Guadalupe River.

“Moderate” risk of excessive rainfall outlined by the Weather Prediction Center at 16:00z on July 4. At 1:18 pm CDT on July 3, 2025, the National Weather Service office in San Antonio, Texas, issued a flood watch for Kerr County and other areas that would later be impacted by severe flooding. The watch warned of 1–3 inches of rain, with isolated areas seeing closer to 5–7 inches. The watch noted that there would be “rounds of scattered to widespread showers and storms with heavy rain rates possible.”

On July 3 at 6:10 pm CDT, the Weather Prediction Center branch of the NWS issued a Mesoscale Precipitation Discussion citing that “areas of flash flooding will be likely across central TX overnight with very heavy rainfall expected. Hourly rainfall in excess of 2 to 3 inches seems reasonable given the environment and localized 6-hr totals over 6 inches will be possible”, and detailing that the potential flooding may have “significant impacts”. Another discussion issued at 6:27 am on July 4 used stronger wording, warning that “Considerable to catastrophic flash flood impacts can continue to be expected.”

Numerous flash flood warnings were issued throughout the event. Several of these warnings contained dire flash flood emergency wording. The first flash flood warning for the event was issued at 11:41 pm CDT on July 3 and was for Bandera County. At 1:14 am CDT on July 4, the first flash flood warning with a “considerable” tags was issued for Bandera and Kerr Counties; for Hunt and Ingram in Kerr County, at 4:03 am on July 4, a flash flood emergency was sent residents to “SEEK HIGHER GROUND NOW!” and that rainfall rates of 2–4 inches per hour would continue to impact the area which had already seen 4–10 inches of rain. By 4:05, the Guadalupe River at Hunt had risen to 21.99 feet, rising over ten feet in an hour and reaching major flood stage. The river continued to surge, reaching 37.52 feet and still rising at 5:10 am when the gauge at Hunt stopped updating. This level marked the second highest ever recorded at Hunt, surpassing flash flooding that occurred in 1987. Multiple summer camps near Hunt, notably Camp Mystic, experienced catastrophic flooding.

Further down the Guadalupe River, a flash flood emergency was issued by the NWS for Kerrville at 5:34 am, again warning of the potential for “catastrophic” flood damage. Between 5:15 and 6:45, the river surged from less than two feet to 34.29 feet and major flood stage.

Effects - In the early morning of July 4, rain totaling 6.5 inches fell in just three hours, resulting in numerous water-related rescues. In Hunt, Texas, where the two branches of the Guadalupe River meet, the river gauge recorded a 22-foot rise in 2 hours before failing when it reached 29 feet. Downstream in Kerrville, the river surged to 21 feet. Further downstream, in Comfort, it surged to 29.86 feet. The city of Kerrville issued a disaster declaration on July 4 following the floods. In total, 5–11 inches of rain fell on some areas that experienced significant flood effects.

Flooding continued into July 5 with two more flash flood emergencies being issued for areas around Lake Travis north of Austin. Later, a third flash flood emergency was issued for central Comal County, noting that “local law enforcement reported flooding of the Guadalupe River”. 20.33 inches of rain fell northwest of Streeter.

Another flash flood emergency was issued for Comfort, where the water level at the Guadalupe River surged from 3.15 feet at 8:45 am to 35.26 feet just two hours later at 10:45 as a wall of water surged down the river. The area was placed under a flash flood emergency at 7:24 am, warning that “automated rain gauges indicate a large and deadly flood wave is moving down the Guadalupe River” over an hour before the water level began to surge. On July 7, another “moderate” risk for excessive rainfall was outlined by the WPC; A flash flood watch was issued for much of central Texas at 11:46 pm CDT on July 6, warning of 2-4 inches of rain with some areas possibly seeing as much as 10 inches through 7 pm on July 7.



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