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**26**  
YEARS 2000-2026

Happy New Year! Page 8



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## TOOTIN' THE TUBAS

**Tumbleweed Smith**



**Tumbleweed Smith**

There are about 250 Tuba Christmases around the country when tuba players get together and play Christmas songs. Jeff Baker is in charge of 6 of six them in the Metroplex. "I don't know of any other place in the country that could host this many events." He's in charge of Tuba Christmases in Fort Worth, Dallas, Stephenville, Commerce, Denton and Allen. They all take place at different dates and times. "We have registration, then a rehearsal, then the concert." Says Jeff. "The concerts last about an hour." He has played tuba 32 years and says Tuba Christmas dates back to 1974 because a famous tuba player wanted to pay tribute to his teacher. "Harvey Philips is the founder of Tuba Christmas. He's a legend in the brass world. He dropped out of high school to join the Ringling Brothers Circus Band and played tuba. He ended up moving to New York and hung out and recorded with Louis Armstrong, Frank Sinatra and other big wigs back in the 1950s.

"He wanted to honor his tuba teacher, William Bell, who was born on Christmas day in 1902. A bunch of tuba players performing Christmas music seemed like a proper tribute. So, he assembled tuba players in 1974 and they played on the ice rink in Rockefeller Center. It has grown to a nationwide event. There are 20 Tuba Christmases in Texas. It's cool. Families come back every year and have a good time."

Jeff has taught at A & M Commerce 20 years. He lives at Little Elm near Frisco. He attended Garland schools and started playing with Tuba Christmas in Dallas when he was 14 years old back in the 1992. "In Dallas, we do it in Thanksgiving Square and we rehearse underground so you can imagine what 200 tubas sound like with concrete walls and ten feet ceilings." Some smaller towns have it in an auditorium.

There are all levels of tuba players. "Some are in the 6th grade just starting out and others are graduate music majors, band directors, even some professionals. Some are retired folks that maybe played tuba in high school and went on to do something else, picked it back up and considered this a good place to play. They're all sitting together and having fun. There's no ego when you're playing Christmas carols for the community. Tinsel lights and other things decorate the horns."

The instruments include tubas, Sousaphones (the big things that wrap around players, designed by John Philip Sousa) and baritones, also called euphoniums or tenor tubas. "Some purists believe it should be only tubas, but other groups branch out sometimes to include French horns. But certainly, no trombones or trumpets. It's sort of up to the local organizer. I like just tubas but hate to turn people away during the holiday season if they play something else."

He starts working on the concerts in the summer. "Registration is \$15 for the players but the concerts are free to the public. "We use the same book Harvey used back in 1974. It's in 4-part harmony so it sounds like an acapella choir singing in 4 voices. You buy the book once and can use it at every event in the country. We have a commemorative button, different every year and some people have dozens. They have become real collectors' items. Often, we also have hats and scarves for sale. It is just a fun event for families and the sound quality is really amazing."

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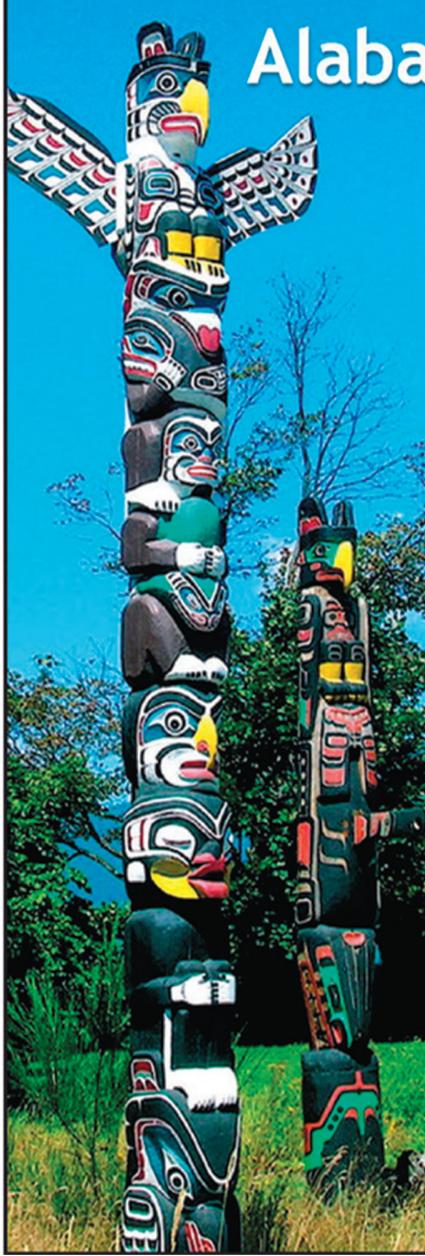
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# Obits



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### **Roy McGahee**

December 29, 1946 — January 5, 2026

Funeral service for Roy McGahee, age 79 of Sulphur Springs, Texas will be held at 1:00 P.M. on Wednesday, January 7, 2026 at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home with Johnny Darrow officiating. Interment will follow at Restlawn Memorial Park with Todd Malone, Chad Rawson, John Ballard, Spencer McQueen, Eric Santjer serving as pallbearers. Visitation will be held from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M. on Tuesday, January 6, 2026 at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home. Mr. McGahee passed away on January 5, 2026 after a long battle of cancer.

Roy was born on December 29, 1946 in Pittsburg, Texas to James and Earlene (Springer) McGahee. He married Norma Lee Wright on January 28, 1966 in Sulphur Springs, Texas. Roy went to UT Southwestern to become a radiologist. He worked from 1968 until 2003 at Hopkins County Memorial Hospital. Roy was a member of the First Baptist Church —

Sulphur Springs, Texas.

He is survived by his wife, Norma Lee “Butch”; Son, Marc McGahee and wife, Cassi; daughter, Marcie Kerrigan; bonus-son, Robert Dale and wife, Kristy; grandchildren, Kimber Kerrigan, Sloan McGahee and wife, Gabby, Alexandria Hollie and husband, Ken, Alex Rodriguez and wife, Lainey, Tory Modesitt and husband, Ty; six great grandchildren and sister, Lee Ann Sparks.

Roy was preceded in death by his parents, James and Earlene; brother, Mike McGahee; father and mother-in-law, Delbert and Odessa Wright.



### **Helen Marie McDaniel**

September 19, 1939 ~ December 30, 2025 (age 86)

A Funeral Service for Helen Marie McDaniel, age 86, was held at 12:00 p.m. on Monday, January 5, 2026, at West Oaks Funeral Home with Bro. Stace McEwin officiating. Brad Drake, Paul Drake, Bo Pridemore, Scott Wilson, Robert Eaton, Caleb Jones, and Justin Walls served as pallbearers. Interment followed the service at 3:30 p.m. at Forest Chapel Cemetery. Visitation was one hour prior to the service at 11:00 a.m. Helen passed away on Tuesday, December 30, 2025, in Sulphur Springs, Texas.

Helen was born on September 19, 1939, to Kim Buck Drake and Bertha Mae Walker Drake in Direct, Texas. She married LaRoyce McDaniel on May 3, 1958, in Garretts Bluff, Texas, he preceded her in death. She worked in banking for many years, was a member of First Baptist Church, and loved spending time with her family especially her grandchildren.

She is survived by her sons, Rory McDaniel and Wade McDaniel and his wife, Wendi; daughter, Shannon Brock and her husband, Brett; brother, Richard Drake and his wife, Trava; sister, Becky Pridemore; sister-in-law, Wanda Durham; grandchildren, Whitney Spigener, Hayley Jones and her husband, Caleb, Landon Brock, Wylie McDaniel, Brian McDaniel and his wife, Jennifer, Amanda McDaniel; great-grandchildren, Mick McDaniel, Kevin McDaniel, Brandon McDaniel, River McDaniel, Kyle Densmore, Brayden Densmore, Hunter McPherson and his wife, Makayla, Tanner McPherson and his wife, Alexis, Allison Spigener, Parker Spigener, Gunner McKinney, and Lucy Jones; great-great-grandchild, Mae Lynn McPherson as well as numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Helen was preceded in death by her parents, Kim Buck and Bertha Mae Drake, her loving husband, LaRoyce McDaniel, brother, Hubert Drake, and sisters, Hazel, Mary, Melba, and Ann.

The family would like to thank the staff at Rockcreek Nursing and Rehab and Heart to Heart Hospice for their comfort and care.

Arrangements were under the direction of West Oaks Funeral Home. [www.westoaksfuneralhome.com](http://www.westoaksfuneralhome.com)



### **Dereald Lynn Millsap**

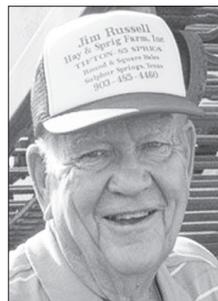
December 22, 1956 ~ January 2, 2026 (age 69)

Graveside services for Dereald Lynn Millsap, age 69, of Sulphur Springs will be conducted at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 7, 2026 at Greenview Cemetery with Bro. Robert Burns officiating. Pallbearers will be Harrell Hettich, James Hettich, Larry Millsap, Tim Boney, Teddy Jennings, Rick Jennings, Greyson Pruitt and Nathan Pruitt. There will be no formal visitation. Dereald was born on December 22, 1956 in Sulphur Springs the son of Johnnie Murreald Millsap and Frankie L. Potts Millsap. Dereald was a 1975 graduate of North Garland High School. He worked for Texas Instruments and then became a commercial truck driver for Roadway Express where he retired. Dereald was a collector of antique cars and parts. His dream was to one day build a shop to work on antique cars. He loved his family very much. He is survived

by one brother, Cletis M. Millsap of Sulphur Springs, sisters, Sherry Millsap of Rowlett, Barbara Potts and husband Tim of

Sulphur Springs and many family members and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, sisters, Kathie Millsap and Shelia Millsap. Memorials may be made to the Greenview Cemetery Association, P. O. Box 1504, Sulphur Springs, Texas, 75482. Arrangements are under the direction of West Oaks Funeral Home. [www.westoaksfuneralhome.com](http://www.westoaksfuneralhome.com)

# Obits *Continued*



## **Jim Russell**

January 17, 1938 — January 1, 2026

Jim was born on January 17, 1938, in Frankfort, Indiana to Gordon and Nettie (McCoy) Russell. He married Carolyn McClaine on August 22, 1958, in New Brunswick, Indiana. He graduated from Butler University with his Bachelor's of Science Degree in Education. Jim worked as a supervisor for Ford Motor Company in Indianapolis for 11 years. He then started Jim Russell Real Estate in Lebanon, Indiana, along with a tax office, and a feeder pig farm, followed by a construction company building houses. Jim then started teaching and coaching in Lebanon at Pinnell School. In 1976, he moved to Texas and coached at Sulphur Springs High School until 1985. Once Jim was done coaching, he started Jim Russell Hay and Sprig Farm. He was a member of the New Brunswick Christian Church.

He is survived by his wife, Carolyn; sons Robert Russell and wife Arlene, and John Russell and wife Christie; daughter Debby Brewer and husband Barry; grandchildren Rob Russell, Jennifer Miller and husband Dustin, Kayla Pipkin and husband Cody, Kelli Olvera and husband Eddy, Karli May and husband Zak, Josh Russell and wife Tonya, Jarrett Russell and wife Danielle, and Jalynn Dropick and husband Pete; great grandchildren Katie and Kaden Olvera, Addi, Bo, and Charleigh Pipkin, Maddox May, Bentley and Lane Russell, Jacob and Mason Miller, Emerson Russell, Preston Dropick, and Barrett Russell; brothers Tom Russell and wife Jane, and Fred Russell and wife Cathy; sister-in-law Nancy Russell; and numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents and brother, Dave Russell.

The family would like to give a special thanks to Jim's caretaker, Ester Vaughn, Carriage House Manor staff, Christus Mother Frances — Sulphur Springs Hospital staff, Choice Hospice, and Dr. Arnecke.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hopkins County Healthcare Foundation at <https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=RmWsCM> or P.O. Box 1011, Sulphur Springs, TX, 75483-1011.

## **Article: The Future of Wellness How Peptides Are Changing the Way We Heal and Thrive**

Wellness is no longer a trend rooted in short term fixes or surface level self-care. It has evolved into a deeper, more intentional approach to health that recognizes the body as an interconnected system. True wellness is about resilience, balance, and supporting the body at a cellular level so it can perform as designed. As people become more informed and proactive about their health, interest has shifted toward therapies that work with the body rather than against it. One of the most talked about and promising areas in this space is peptides.

Peptides are short chains of amino acids that serve as signaling molecules in the body. They already exist naturally and play essential roles in nearly every biological process including hormone production, immune response, tissue repair, metabolism, and brain function. Think of peptides as messengers that tell the body what to do and when to do it. As we age, produce more stress, and face environmental toxins, our natural peptide production can decline. When those signals weaken, the body does not respond as efficiently, which can show up as fatigue, slower recovery, weight changes, inflammation, or a general feeling of imbalance.

Introducing peptides into a wellness plan is not about replacing the body's function but about restoring communication within it. When used appropriately and under professional guidance, peptides can help remind the body how to heal, regulate, and optimize itself. This is why peptides are gaining attention in longevity medicine, performance optimization, aesthetic wellness, and preventative health.

From a wellness perspective, peptides are appealing because they are targeted. Unlike broad medications that may affect multiple systems at once, peptides are designed to act on specific receptors or pathways. This precision often allows for more personalized support with fewer unwanted effects. Some peptides are studied for improving sleep quality and mental clarity. Others are associated with muscle recovery, fat metabolism, skin health, or immune balance. Rather than masking symptoms, peptides aim to support the root biological processes behind them.

Wellness is also about timing and intention. Peptides are not a magic solution and they work best when paired with foundational habits such as proper nutrition, hydration, movement, sleep, and stress management. When the basics are neglected, even the most advanced therapies will fall short. When the foundation is strong, peptides can act as a powerful complement that enhances results and accelerates progress.

It is important to approach peptides with education and respect. Not all peptides are the same and quality, sourcing, dosing, and oversight matter. Wellness should always prioritize safety, transparency, and realistic expectations. The goal is not to chase youth or perfection but to support vitality, function, and quality of life at every stage.

As the wellness industry continues to mature, peptides represent a bridge between natural biology and modern science. They reflect a shift toward smarter, more individualized care that honors how the body communicates and heals. For those seeking a deeper level of wellness, peptides offer an exciting introduction to what is possible when we work with the body's own intelligence rather than trying to override it.



**Gabriela Camacho**

# Welcome 2026

Welcome the new year with fresh starts, resolutions, traditions like eating lucky foods (lentils, grapes), or quiet reflection and journaling, while sharing joy with messages of hope, new adventures, and gratitude for past moments. It's a time for new beginnings, celebrating togetherness, and embracing endless possibilities for the year ahead.

*Ideas for Welcoming the New Year....Reflect & Plan,  
Celebrate & Connect, Embrace Traditions, Give Back*

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