



## Dale LaValley

October 29, 1931 - April 11, 2020

Dale LaValley passed away on Saturday, April 11, 2020, surrounded by his family. He was 88 years old. Due to the national health crisis a celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Clarence Dale LaValley was born October 29, 1931 to Homer O LaValley and Edna (Centell) LaValley in Holdenville, OK. He spent his childhood with his best friend, Bob Eckles, hunting, trapping and fishing in the Holdenville area. He generated a good income selling fox, rabbit and raccoon hides during his school years. After graduating from Holdenville High School in 1948, he attended East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma and graduated with a degree in Elementary Education. Later, he received a master's in education from Tulsa University and had 30 hours towards his doctorate in Elementary Education.

On September 1, 1953, he married his high school sweetheart, Ralonda Jo Cook, in Holdenville. It is a testament to their great love for each other that he got married on the opening day of dove season. The couple moved to Tulsa where he worked as a science teacher at Bryant Elementary School and ultimately became principal also at Bryant. He retired from the Tulsa School system with over 30 years of service. Dale was an inspiration and role model to thousands of students and many, many teachers over his 30 years in the Tulsa Public Schools investing most of those years into Bryant Elementary and the Dawson community. He loved and cared for the teachers, young students and their families. He remembered every student by name long after they were his students.

Dale was an avid hunter, fisherman, and outdoorsman all of his life. Many days were spent on the Verdigris Navigation channel hauling in catfish well over 50 lbs. In their retirement years, he and Jo traveled yearly to Iowa to bird hunt. He loved music and played trumpet in the marching band in high school, but he loved bluegrass the best. Many a week were spent in their motorhome at Bluegrass Festivals all over Oklahoma and Arkansas. In his spare time, he raised a huge garden with some of the largest tomatoes and sweetest corn anybody had ever seen. No-body loved a good story better

than he did and nobody could tell a good story better than he could. He was a practical jokester and it made his day when he could “pull off a good one” on someone. Dale was a Mason for 54 years. He was a long-time member of the Sheridan Road Baptist Church and the Belview Baptist Church. And last, but most certainly not least, he was an avid Oklahoma Sooners fan. Woe be the person who tried to schedule something when an OU football game was on.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Jo; his son, Jimmy (Kristie) of Cedaredge, CO; his daughters, Debbie Jo (Michael) Berrier of Centennial, CO; and Kay (Scott) Pryer of Tulsa; 7 grandchildren: Brandon (Cori) LaValley, Sean (Tijana) LaValley, Clint (Bethany) Spencer, Jessi-ca (Jeff) Taylor, Nick (Dystaney) Nordberg, Julie (Austin) Chadwick, Brent (Michelle) Pryer, and 17 great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, Homer and Edna LaValley.

Our family would particularly like to thank the staff of Aberdeen Heights Assisted Living for the wonderful care and compassion they have shown to both our Dad and Mom. They have been just remarkable.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested donations be made to Belview Baptist Church, 1040 N Yale Ave, Tulsa, OK 74115

# Comments

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“ Mr. LaValley was a big-time OU football fan and a longtime subscriber to Sooner Spectator magazine, for which I am editor. We spoke occasionally on the phone when he called to renew - and I always admired his unbridled passion for the Sooners! Rest in peace, sir.

**Jay Upchurch** - July 22 at 04:00 PM

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“ Mr. LaValley was my first principal. In 1966 the law allowed up to 20 students in each EMH class. I was terrified my first few months, but Mr. LaValley guided and supported me through that tough start of a career in Special Education which continued for 44 years.

**Linda Stringer Modenbach** - May 13 at 06:34 PM

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“ I really enjoyed the times that I was able to visit my Aunt Jo and Uncle Dale growing up. Two of my favorites! My Uncle Dale always welcomed me into his home. Homegrown tomatoes from his garden, catfish that he had caught all fried up for dinner, college basketball games on the television, teasing me for silly things just to get me to smile, funny stories about the kids at his school and he never failed to clean all of my jewelry while I was there (something that I greatly appreciated, they always looked brand new after he got a hold of them!)

When I was growing up and we visited Oklahoma in the summer, my Dad always wanted to meet up with my Uncle Dale and my Aunt Jo wherever they were camping out and it was always an adventure. Sometimes I could even go out with him on his fishing boat, which was a real treat for me. Honestly, one of my favorite things to do is camp and fish. I thank my Uncle Dale and my father for that! I only hope I did them justice with my own boys!

I would have really liked to live closer to my Aunt Jo and Uncle Dale while raising my kids because they were and are such wonderful loving people to be around. But unfortunately, it did not work out that way. My Uncle Dale was a Godly man who was a true blessing to know! My deepest sympathy for my sweet Aunt Jo, Jimmy Dale, Debbie, Kay and of course all the rest of the family and friends. I know Uncle Dale will surely be missed by all.

Someone as special as Uncle Dale will never be forgotten. He will remain in our hearts forever.

Love Katrina and family



**Katrina Isenburg** - April 18 at 01:19 PM



“ So beautiful! Thank you, Katrina.

**Kristie** - April 22 at 09:25 PM

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“ Mr. LaValley. Just very sound of his name raised ripples of excitement throughout an entire class (or, in the instance of an assembly, an entire school), for Mr. LaValley knew every single one of us by name, he was beloved, he was respected, and he was a force to be reckoned with if you had, unfortunately for you, misbehaved. Mr. LaValley made everything in school life just and fair and right. My mother taught Kinderfarten at Bryant mid-60s through the 80s or so, and she always said that he was the best principal ever. He supported the teachers in the classrooms, and he made the work and learning environment at Bryant excellent in many ways. Looking back, I now see that he was a natural educator, leader and team builder. I will never have enough words to describe the tremendous influence he had on so many lives. Earth is definitely poorer. It has lost a good, good man. Thank you, Mr. LaValley. We just can't thank you enough. (Kendel Roberson Hall, Braynt student 1966-1971)

Kendel Hall - April 16 at 06:01 PM

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“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dale LaValley.



April 15 at 10:35 AM

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“ What a wonderful teacher and man he was. I went to Bryant elementary from kindergarten to 6th grade. Mr LaValley was my homeroom teacher in 6th grade (1958-59) I never heard one bad thing said about him. Such a great example to so many kids. My prayers for peace and comfort to his family. RIP Mr LaValley knowing you made such a difference in so many lives

Janet (Simpson) Hillhouse - April 14 at 09:38 PM

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“ We became friends with Dale and Jo in the late 90's. We met them through Bluegrass music when we traveled as Sweet Water. They supported us whenever possible. We had a lot in common as several in the band were educators. They even invited us in to their home and fed us fish. Yum! Dale and Jo were the sweetest people ever, and such an inspiration to others through the love they shared with one another. Most importantly, we had a bond as brothers and sisters in Christ. So we know that someday we will be able to visit once again.

Sister Jo, We love you and we pray that you will be surrounded by God's comfort.

Russell and Dawnette Sparks

**Russell & Dawnette Sparks** - April 14 at 09:25 PM

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“ MR LAVALLEY A GREAT MAN HE WAS A BIG PART OF MY YOUNG LIFE, I GOT A FEW SWATS FROM HIM HE COULD LINE YOU RIGHT UP HA HA.3RD GRADE ABOUT ABOUT 1957 OR 58 ??  
MASON MORTON

**MASON MORTON** - April 14 at 09:01 PM

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“ Thank you for being such a great science teacher some 60 years ago. I had a good education at Bryant and I passed much of it on to my 3 kids and 2 grandchildren. So, education has a way of getting 'passed along' thru the family. I can still see you standing up there at that blackboard and pointing out the day's lessons. Much sympathy to your family.

**Brenda Poynter Betts** - April 14 at 05:52 PM



“ My condolences to your family. This man was my science teacher back in the late 1950s when he was a very young man and when there were not many Male teachers. He was loved by all of his students and I have many fond memories of him. Later in life a friend of mine taught at Bryant while he was principal. Rest in peace. You have earned your wings.

**Susan Jane Dykes Kostas** - April 15 at 04:29 PM

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“ This wonderful gentleman is one of my first childhood memories. He touched many, many lives. Condolences to the family.



**Kenny J** - April 14 at 05:50 PM

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“ John and Joyce Humphrey purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Dale LaValley.



**John and Joyce Humphrey** - April 14 at 03:40 PM

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“ I am one of the many young lives Mr. LaValley had an impact on. I moved to Oklahoma when I was 9 years old and he was my first Principal. I was so scared of such a big school and such a big city. So many wonderful memories. Thank you for the way you cared for all of us. Blessings to your family. I am glad you had such a wonderful life. At 52 I can only hope I have as many wonderful things in my life!

**Juanita Lehr Christenson** - April 14 at 03:17 PM

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“ Loved this man. He was the best Principal ever at Bryant Elementary.

**Yvonne Bozone** - April 14 at 01:35 PM

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“ I attended Bryant from the middle of my third grade year until the end of my sixth grade year. It was short period of time, but I remember the kindness of Principal LaValley. He commanded respect because he gave it. I also remember that he had a good sense of humor :). So glad that he had a long happy life.

**Tamara Settles** - April 14 at 12:44 PM

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“ Dale was always one of my favorite people. He was there with a kind word and that big smile. I missed seeing him the last couple of years at all the Bluegrass Festivals.

Dale was a big fan of the Bluegrass & Chili Festival...he & Jo were part of our Festival family. Prayers for the entire LaValley family.

Dell Davis

**Dell Davis** - April 14 at 12:33 PM

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“ I will miss you greatly. Thank you for being a mentor, friend and grandpa (like) to me. You saved me from a pitbull and helped me through some of life's challenges. I know your with the Lord and are at peace. I love you and thank you for everything.

**Jessica Lofgren ( Bales )** - April 14 at 11:48 AM

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“ What a great man and principal! He and his wife were always there for our family. Thank you always and God Bless

**lori** - April 14 at 10:50 AM

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“ I went to Bryant Elem. In half of my 2cd grade year. I am a lot younger than my sister and brothers who had went to school at Bryant as well. The first thing he said to me is you must be a Hinton. He obviously had to deal with my brother Donnie alot. lol He was always so nice and i really adored him. I am 52 now and know he lived a long fruitful life. Rest in peace Mr. Lavally. You had an impact on a lot of childrens lives.

**Dana su Hinton"Brown"** - April 14 at 05:46 AM



“ A principal and a friend he had 3 of my children Gayle, Kelly, and Doug, Smalley kids. You could never find a nicer guy. RIP Wayne & Joyce Smalley

**Joyce Smalley** - April 14 at 11:01 PM

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“ I will always remember showing him pictures of fish I caught with my dad and it was usually when I was sent to his office for punishment, he used to think I got in trouble just to come show him my pictures.We still talked fishing when ever he came bye the shop I will miss our talks

**James Lahmeyer** - April 14 at 01:05 AM

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“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



**Kathy Jones** - April 13 at 11:31 PM



“ Love this picture. My 6th grade teacher 1958-59 Janet Simpson Hillhouse

**Janet Simpson Hillhouse** - April 14 at 09:45 PM

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“ He was my principal at Bryant Elementary in 1985-1986. My first principal, as it was my kindergarten year. Ever since that time I've run across fellow alumni and staff, and every single person held Mr. LaValley in high regard.

**Dan** - April 13 at 11:00 PM



“ I should have guessed by his manner and character, that we were Masons. He had such a huge influence on his students, no wonder he is so highly esteemed.

**Everett Neal** - April 14 at 12:39 PM



“ RIP Mr. La Valley, I went to Bryant Elementary School in the 4th & 5th Grade. I played Flag Football & Baseball. Mr. Kilgore was our coach. I remember the simpler times when you did pie walks & people took a swing with a sledge hammer at an old car to raise money at the school days fair. I remember that pillar of a man whom, I did not dare want to visit in his office. Although, I remember him to be soft spoken, yet stern in his delivery.

Bryant Chief Proud 1968 - 1969.

**Greg** - April 14 at 05:54 PM