

# **Ralph Hayhurst Overstreet**

October 7, 1916 ~ February 3, 2020 (age 103)

## **Obituary**

Ralph Hayhurst Overstreet, 103, resident of Bentonville, Arkansas, passed away peacefully on Monday, February 3, 2020 at The Meadows in Bentonville, Arkansas. He was born October 7, 1916 in Hamlin, Texas to Paul C. Overstreet and Lou Hayhurst Overstreet.

Ralph graduated from Springdale High School and received Spring semester track scholarships from the University of Arkansas. He lettered in the mile run for the U of A in '37, '38 and '39. At that time, watch making was very appealing. He graduated from Elgin Watch College in 1941. He went to work in the Elgin Watch factory and married Belle Little on his first paycheck. Their first son Don was born there.



He entered the Navy and was assigned to the Seabees. He was stationed on Saipan until the war ended, then was stationed in occupied Japan before coming home. He was released from active duty and worked in a jewelry store in South Dakota where their second son Fred was born.

When Belle's baby sister Flora Jo married Tommy Hinson in 1948, they came home for the wedding. Ralph found a little watch repair shop for sale on the Bentonville Square in the entrance to the Park Movie Theater. Overstreet's Jewelry was founded and their third son Jim would be born in Bentonville.

Belle and Ralph became active members of First Baptist Church, where she would be a Sunday School teacher and sing in the choir, while Ralph served as a deacon and Sunday School secretary. He was very active in the Rotary and Lions Clubs. They were faithful Band Boosters for all three sons.

In the early fifties, Dr. Neal Compton needed a hospital corpsman in the Eureka Springs unit of the Navy Reserve, so he enlisted to be Neal's medic. Ralph completed 21 years in the Navy and told interesting stories about driving there in all kinds of weather when the road was a real challenge. As a veteran, he was active in the American Legion and VFW in Bentonville.

Ralph walked home for lunch in nice weather for many years, working on his bench upstairs six days a week. He and Belle enjoyed breakfast together at local restaurants and fast became the favorites of local waitresses. The faithful companions hardly missed a beat after her partially paralyzing stroke in 1988. He continued taking her to breakfast before going to work and out for supper six days a week for twenty years until her passing. He continued working those same days at his beloved bench until he was 101 and a half.

Overstreet's Jewelry became a local legend, honored as a family with the Arthur (Rabbit) Dickerson Award by the Chamber of Commerce. Ralph was honored by the City of Bentonville with a birthday dinner at his 100th birthday and again this year at his 103rd birthday, with Mayor Stephanie Orman giving him the key to the city.

He was preceded in death by his wife of sixty-six years, Belle Overstreet (2008); one son, Fred and his wife Connie Overstreet and two sisters, Paula and Rachael. Ralph was a favorite uncle to Rachael's children, and her family kept in contact with their Uncle Ralph, including his 100th birthday celebration, until his passing.

Ralph is survived by two sons, Don (Sue Ann) Overstreet of Bentonville and Jim (Phyllis) Overstreet of Rogers; six grandchildren, Amy Brand, Jeff, Doug, Danny, Evan and John Overstreet, fourteen great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren.

Visitation with the family will be held at 10 a.m. February 20 in the Worship Center of First Baptist Church of Bentonville. The memorial service will be held at 11:00 a.m. with the Rev. Tom Smith officiating. Military honors will be provided by the United States Navy. He will be laid to rest at the National Cemetery in Fayetteville with a private family service.

Memorials may be made in memory of Ralph Overstreet to: Humane Society for Animals Inc. 407 E. Nursery Rd. Rogers, AR 72757. <https://nwahumanesocietyforanimals.org/> Arrangements have been entrusted to Stockdale-Moody Funeral Services of Rogers. Memories may be shared at [Stockdale-Moodyfs.com](https://www.stockdalemoody.com)