

Class of 1962 Coming Home King Nominee: Rayford Williams

I was born in Sweetwater, Texas and was raised in Hamlin, graduating in 1962. I participated in football and track. In 1961, as a junior, I was on our track team's 4 x 400 relay team and we placed 3rd in the Texas State Finals. Gary, Jody, and David, all seniors, made me look good! Following graduation, I attended McMurry University and graduated with a double major in math and science, plus a Texas teaching credential. I then moved to California and got a job in the Cypress School District and married Linda Andress, whose families (Andress and Fowler) were also raised in Hamlin. I returned to college to complete my fifth year and earn a California teaching credential. In 1973, I earned my Masters Degree in Education Systems Management from Chapman University.

My wife and I have been married for 56 years and have one son, Jason. In 2005, I was selected as California's Teacher of the Year thus allowing me the privilege and opportunity to go to Japan to experience their educational system. I then attended Space Camp in Huntsville, AL where Teachers of the Year from all states had the opportunity to meet people who had important roles in our space program. I retired after 39 years of teaching.

During my summer breaks over the years, I have completed hiking the Appalachian Trail, the Pacific Crest Trail, and the Grand Canyon rim to rim. I have also enjoyed riding my bicycle around the perimeter of the United States. I even passed through Hamlin on my way to Florida on my bicycle and made news in *The Hamlin Herald*. As I am now slowing down, my son and I rode motorcycles from Mexico to Alaska and back, which was much easier than peddling a bicycle! In retirement, we still enjoy traveling, being with family, walks along the beach, reading good books, trips to the wine county, visiting National Parks, plus spoiling our pets. Life is good! Happy Trails!