



# Neal Galloway

SEP 11, 1926 - MAR 10, 2017



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## Neal Galloway

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**N**eal Gordon Galloway, former Mayor of the City of Elsa, died Friday, March 10, 2017 at Knapp Memorial Hospital in Weslaco following a short illness. He was 90.

Neal was born on September 11, 1926 in Weslaco, Hidalgo County, Texas, the first born of three children to Ruth Marie Carlson Galloway and John Frank Galloway. He claimed to be the first Texas-born grandchild of Swedish immigrants Carl Oscar Carlson and Maria Bergstrom Carlson.

His parents moved from Kansas in May 1925, purchased land from his uncle, and established a dairy farm. Spurred by the growth of the Southern Pacific Railroad from Edinburg to Brownsville, the American Land Company sold city lots on September 30, 1926 in what became Edcouch when he was 19 days old, as well as city lots in Elsa on March 2, 1927 when he was six months old.

The Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District was formed in 1931 when he was five. He learned to speak Spanish fluently as a toddler from Longhina Aleman. He said she was his "second mother" and taught him to ask for "papas y carne" in the tortillas she hand made for him.

Aleman's husband was a valued employee at the Galloway Dairy. Neal began his formal education at the Center School in September 1932, moved to the red brick school in Edcouch in December 1932, and went to the new high school as a seventh grader in September 1938, graduating after eleven years of schooling from Edcouch-Elsa High School in May 1943.

In September 1943, he reported as a freshman Class of 1947 to Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. At the end of his freshman year, he joined the United States Navy. He was a sailor for two years, trained to operate and maintain the installed radar and electronic warfare equipment.



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After being released from active duty, he returned to College Station and continued his study toward a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics, graduating on August 27, 1948. Following his graduation from college, he worked for a year as a traveling burlap bag salesman for Chase Bag Company of Chicago, Illinois, manufacturer of bags for American industry and agriculture.

He returned to the Delta Area in 1949 and with \$1500 he had saved, bought a tractor and five pieces of equipment and began his farming career. In July of that year, his mother encouraged him to lifeguard at a pool party in McAllen for his cousin.

There, he met a pretty auburn-haired homemaking teacher originally from Hillsboro, Texas. Fran was happy and wearing a red bathing suit, his favorite color. He became interested immediately. They were married the next April on Good Friday at the Edcouch church.

Their more than sixty-four year-long marriage was a solid partnership based on love, respect, loyalty, and sharing, producing four daughters and two sons. Neal was a faithful member of the First United Methodist Church of Edcouch all of his life.

He served in every position from Sunday school teacher to lay leader and supported the church with his gifts, his presence, his prayers, and his service. For over three decades, he was a delegate to the Southwest Texas Annual Conference, representing his local church in the yearly meeting.

He was a fixture in the church kitchen slicing the cabbage he grew and provided for cole slaw to be served at the popular Enchilada Supper, the church's annual fundraiser. Civic minded, Neal contributed to making his community better.

Although interested in improving education for the Anglo and Hispanic student population, he could not run for School Board because the Galloway Dairy sold milk to the Edcouch-Elsa schools. Neal turned to City of Elsa.

In 1957, he was elected to the city commission serving two two-year terms. In 1961 he won the Mayor's race, governing from 1961-65. He ran again and lost by one vote to Carl Higdon.

As Mayor, Neal also served as Justice of the Peace and settled traffic cases. His mother was known to have a "heavy foot" when driving her big Chevrolet, and just before the election received a traffic ticket from Elsa police.



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After finding his mother guilty of speeding in traffic court, it was believed (by some) she voted for his competitor rather than her son in that mayoral election. But he never did. In 1967, Neal was appointed Chairman of the Charter Board of the Region One Educational Service Center in the Valley.

Selected by area school board members from within Region One, he paved the way to improve the education of all Valley students. The Texas Legislature created twenty regional education service centers located throughout the state through statute to assist schools in improving student performance, enable schools to operate more efficiently and economically, and implement initiatives assigned by the Commissioner of the Texas Education Agency.

His contributions are still being felt fifty years later as the center continues to support Valley students and their schools. Neal loved to support the Edcouch-Elsa Yellow Jackets and Texas Aggies. As a youth, he was a member of the E-E football team, and as an adult he supported the district's athletic program in unique ways.

In the 1960's during Friday night football, his six-foot-four-inch frame would climb a light pole high above the football field to an open box where he would stand and film each play, wind or rain, for the varsity team to review Saturday morning. When the 'Jackets were in play-off games, he would scout for the coaching staff to help them prepare for championship games.

At A&M, his length helped him garner a spot on the Aggie swim team and he enjoyed many hours there playing water polo. First elected in January 1979, he dedicated 33 years to the Delta Lake Irrigation District serving as President, Secretary and Director of the Board throughout his tenure.

In 2012, he was recognized for contributing sound ideas for the advancement of the district and improvement of its facilities, services, and paving roads. The Delta Area farmer worked with Texas A & M AgriLife Research & Extension Center at Weslaco, most specifically helping Dr. Leonard Pike with scientific research to provide eradication of sweet potato white fly on cotton.

Along with Pike he presented in San Diego at an agricultural research seminar. He also assisted in the study of insect and plant diseases in citrus and was a grower of various varieties of tangerine, Marrs juice oranges and red grapefruit including the Star Ruby variety and Rio Star.



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When Valley freezes in 1983 and 1989 saw temperatures in the mid-teens his groves were wiped out and he chose to turn his agricultural endeavors to sugar cane and winter vegetables at his farm, El Milagro de Monte Alto. He was a member of American Legion Delta Post No. 189, serving as its Commander and supporting and selecting dozens of Edcouch-Elsa High School junior boys through the years to represent the community annually in Austin at American Legion Boys State, one of the most respected and selective educational programs of government instruction for American high school students.

Along with his fellow Legionnaires, Neal advocated patriotism and mutual helpfulness of veterans and service members. Neal was a pioneer, a mentor, and a steadfast and generous friend. A perfect model for all, including his four grandsons who became Eagle Scouts, he was trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent.

His word was his bond. A bear of a man, his hugs were cherished by many. He was a calm and faithful man with the perfect temperament to accept the highs and lows of farming. A devoted family man, he had great fun sharing the bounty of a great meal.

He enjoyed them most when shared with his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. He loved to put his feet up on the table and tell stories. He liked his steak medium rare, baked sweet potatoes, breakfast tacos, "cackle berries" (eggs over easy), buttermilk biscuits, peach preserves, Calabaza Maxima-style, anchovy salad dressing, Milano's Fettuccine Alfredo with shrimp, Hygeia vanilla ice cream, and Mary Kay's lemon meringue pie.

He loved to play games. Each morning, he played the Sudoku puzzle and the Word Jumble in the newspaper. He has played all variations of bridge games throughout his life. Several months after Fran died in October of 2014, he was invited by friends to help their friend recently widowed learn how to play bridge.

He immediately developed a friendship, which very quickly turned into love for Jacqueline Hall. Neal and Jackie married July 27, 2015 and happily spent the last eighteen months together sharing life at their home at John Knox Village in Weslaco.

He said he lived in a period of time when life was simple. He liked to go mudding in his pickup truck while he truck farmed. In later years, he drove his big white Cadillac through deep ruts and puddles. He loved to be outside in the fresh air driving his red Massey Ferguson tractor.



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It was his favorite part of farming. He once remarked, "I hope in the end to be found gone, sitting in the middle of my field in Monte Alto on my tractor." In the end, however, Neal died in the hospital he helped establish 55 years earlier when the Knapp Memorial Methodist Hospital opened with 100 beds on January 2, 1962.

He served on the Special Board Committee along with notable Mid Valley civic and United Methodist leaders Stanley Bohmfalk, M. D., F. E. Knapp, Earl W. Butts, J. S. McManus, Herbert Pike and Orval Stites. His wife, Jacqueline Hall Galloway of Weslaco, and his six children survive him: Gayle Sampley and husband Donald of Atascocita, Carol Hagler and husband Jack of Dallas, Mary Kay Erben and husband Ronnie of New Braunfels, John Galloway and wife Dawn of College Station, Robert Galloway of Houston, and Susan Bitts of Irving.

Grandchildren include Stuart Galloway Sampley and wife Kelly of Austin, Laura Erben Pfister and husband Kyle of Manvel, Valerie Galloway of Houston, Neal Galloway of Fort Worth, Katy Caldwell and husband Trey of Dallas, Patrick Galloway and Stephen Bitts of College Station. Great grandchildren are Murphy and Winfield Sampley of Austin.

His wife of 64 years Laura Frances Duff Galloway, his parents, brother Bruce Carlson Galloway and sister Phyllis Eleanor Galloway, granddaughter Stephanye Irene Sampley and grandson Travis Winfield Sampley preceded him in death.

Those wishing to honor Neal's memory may make contributions to The Neal Galloway Memorial Fund, First United Methodist Church, P. O. Box 275, Edcouch, Texas 78538. A memorial service will be held at First United Methodist Church in Edcouch on Friday, March 17th at 2pm and a celebration of life will be held at John Knox Village on Saturday, March 18th, at 9am.



## Tribute Wall

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RS

**Royce Schuelke** posted:

Memories of your parents are great memories. They are missed by a lot of people. I loved the Chocolate milk from their dairy. A great supporter of Ed Couch - Elsa ISD.

March 16 at 7:53 AM

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JH

**John Robertrobert Hall** posted:

I did not know him well but he made my mother happy and that makes him a good man rest in peace meal from John Robert

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TG

**Terri O'gara** posted:

The memory that I have, is the one when Jackie, my cousin, called to tell us that she was going to marry Neal. The smile in her voice reached all the way from Texas to Chicago! Watching the Wedding service of Neal and Jackie brought such gladness to my mother and I, seeing Jackie so very happy and very much in love. My thoughts and prayers are with you all, with muhc love, Terri Lynn

March 14 at 12:53 PM



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GS

**Gayle Sampley** posted:

Neal Galloway

March 13 at 7:42 AM

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Neal Galloway

March 13 at 7:42 AM

LH

**Lloyd Hesterly** posted:

Neal was the living example of how to be a leader in church, farming and community. He will be missed. One of the fond memories I have of Neal was on Friday nights when he would climb one of the light poles at Jacket football games to operate the game camera. He was always around when we were growing up. Lloyd Hesterly

March 11 at 5:20 PM

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**Butch & Karen Rohr** posted:

I have known Neal all my life. A true friend and fellow christian. Karen and I will miss him and his smile.

March 11 at 6:45 AM



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March 11 at 6:45 AM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Neal by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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