
- Advertisement -

Former Harps president, son of founders, mourned

October 21, 2020

Gerald L. Harp, former president of Harps Food Stores, died Oct. 16. The son of Harvard and Floy Harp, founders of Harps Food Stores, was 80.



Mr. Harp worked for the family business, Harp's Food Stores, for 45 years. He served the last seven years as the president of the company and was instrumental in selling the 70-year-old company to the employees in 2001. He gave 10

percent of his share of the sale to long-term employees of the company. Harp's Food Stores operated on the belief that if associates and customers were served, that the company would be successful.

Mr. Harp graduated from Springdale High School in 1958 and helped organize the class reunions during the years following graduation. Served his country in the U.S. Army, most notably during the Berlin Wall crisis. Years later he would be instrumental in a monument being erected for veterans of Springdale Schools who died serving their country. He returned home to graduate in three-and-a-half years from the University of Arkansas in 1966.

Mr. Harp has been a member of the First Baptist Church of Springdale since 1940. He enjoyed annual fishing trips to Alaska, elk hunting in Colorado (38 years) and pheasant hunting in South Dakota with friends.

A Rotarian, he joining the Springdale Rotary Club in 1968 serving as president 1977-78. He supported Rotary in many ways from delivering loads of medical supplies and equipment to the District Medical Supply Warehouse to support digging water wells in Nigeria, Nicaragua, Peru, and other countries. He purchased soybean/milk producing machines for the country of Peru.

Mr. Harp was a major supporter of the Polio Plus campaign that eradicated Polio from the world. He was a major donor to the Wheelchair Foundation, Chamber of Commerce, Broyles Matthews Scholarship, and Springdale Rotary Family Park. He supported Springdale Schools and helped finance Harp's Elementary School in honor of his parents and their children.

He served on many charitable boards during his life, including the United Fund, Ozark Guidance Foundation Board, Salvation Army, Red Cross, and the Washington Regional Hospital Board.

Mr. Harp was a life member of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Mule Deer Foundation, National Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, Arkansas Historical Society, Arkansas Alumni Association, Springdale Schools Alumni Association, AAll, Consumer Reports, National Rifle Association, and was the first Life Member of the National Hummingbird Society of Arkansas.

Mr. Harp enjoyed supporting the Washington 4-H kids in the premium buying of their animals at the county fair each year and has left support for this project in the future.

He married his wife, Vicki, in 1989. The couple enjoyed cruising the many seas and oceans of the world and were fortunate to visit many countries.

The couple said they were very appreciative of Pam Everett as a long time associate, and Roger Collins who was instrumental in leading Harp's Food Stores employees after the purchase of the company by the employees.

[Print](#)