

**Former County Tax Assessor
[JIMMY] HICKS Loved Family, Sports**
by Jodi Bizar

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James Stanley Hicks, former El Paso tax assessor/collector who served in the tax office for 42 years, died Dec. 29 after suffering from pulmonary fibrosis of the lungs, diabetes and pneumonia. He was 73.

Hicks was born in El Paso to Stanley James and Betty Collen Orr Hicks.

He graduated from Austin High School in 1945 and went on to serve in the military as a meteorologist in Okinawa, Guam and England.

Son James, 43, remembered his father's love for country-western music and dancing; the elder Hicks sang in a country-western band while serving in the Air Force in England.

Remembering his father, Mike Hicks, 38, said the family used to travel around the country, and his father would explain weather formations and patterns in different regions. "He'd point to clouds and formations and explain what kind of weather we would see in a particular part of the country," he said.

Hicks later became tax deputy for El Paso. From 1981 until his retirement he was the county tax assessor/collector.

Mike Hicks said his father loved his job. "My mother always said he had a job no one likes to do, and he likes it. It was his personality for being a stickler for details that helped him in that job."

Hicks, a Democrat, won in 1981 in a landslide victory.

Hicks also served on the board of the El Paso Employee Federal Credit Union, the Rescue Mission of El Paso, the El Paso Diabetes Association and was the precinct chair of the local Democrat Party.

Mike Hicks said his father loved politics and often tried to help newcomers to politics. "He enjoyed campaigning. He would have fun going out and meeting people."



Hicks' oldest son James said, 'People always smile when I tell them who my Dad is and they say, 'Your dad gave me candy!' Jimmy Hicks began handing out sticks of gum while campaigning. The gum had a label that said 'Stick with Hicks.' After the election campaign, he just kept up the habit of giving out candy.'

Keeping with their grandfather's tradition, grandsons Nathaniel Withers and Braxton Hicks handed out hard candies to all who

attended the funeral as they exited the church.

Hicks also liked to help fledgling politicians, such as Mayor Carlos Ramirez, who gave the tribute at Hicks' funeral.

He was also an avid sports lover. He was a coach, umpire and commissioner for boys baseball in El Paso.

Hicks said his father taught and played ball with his sons and daughter, coaching his son James' team to victory in the 1966 Boys Baseball City Championship. "All four of us played," Mike Hicks said.

He coached baseball for 22 years, and at least 30 of his former pupils showed up at his funeral. "They told how he kept them on the straight and narrow. It was wonderful (at the funeral) to hear stories from some of them, whose moms thought they were going to join gangs or go to jail, and now they're in college," Mike Hicks said.

Always paying attention to detail, Hicks apparently had a reputation for knowing the rules of baseball better than anyone.

Mike Hicks said his father used to carry a rule book in his pocket at all times. "He was never wrong," he said.

Hicks was a supporter of UTEP's teams and the El Paso Diablo's baseball team. "UTEP games were a must and Diablo games were a must," Mike Hicks said.

Hicks' community service included membership and participation in Concerned Citizens for Responsible Government, Shriner's Lodge 130, Skyline Optimist Club, Downtown lions Club, Community Concerts, the Day Care Association and Discover El Paso. He served on the boards of the El Paso Em-

ployees Federal Credit Union, Rescue Mission of El Paso, El Paso Diabetes Association and Northeast Democrats.

He was also an active member in St. Alban's Episcopal Church.

"He enjoyed life and laughing," Mike Hicks said. "He was always joking. We have such wonderful memories."

Hicks is survived by his wife of 44 years, Delores H. Hicks; sons James, Ronald, Mike, Thomas; daughter Helen Hicks Withers; his sister, Caroline Mayer; and 13 grandchildren.

"He was a very strict father," Mike Hicks said. "He was a perfectionist, and he demanded that of himself and his kids. He wanted us to be the best we could be."

He added Hicks was equally dedicated to his grandchildren.

Visitation and a rosary were at St. Alban's Episcopal Church Jan. 3 The funeral was Jan. 4 at St. Clement's Episcopal Church. The burial was at Restlawn Cemetery.

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