



## Johnny Rollins

August 25, 2021

Johnny Dewitt Rollins, Jr. was born to Velma Dykes Rollins and Johnny Dewitt Rollins, Sr. on November 16, 1932 in Houston, Texas. He grew up in Houston's East End – Denver Harbor. In 1940, he gave his heart to Jesus at the Faith Memorial Baptist Church just off of Lyons Avenue and graduated from Charles H. Milby High School in 1951. He attended Lamar State College (now Lamar University) on a football scholarship. But when a serious back injury ended his football career (and cost him the scholarship), he enlisted in the United States Navy. He served his country for four years, working first as a helicopter mechanic and then as a member of the Shore Patrol. He often observed that he only set foot on a ship to deliver a drunken sailor from a San Diego bar to the brig. This led to a life-long interest in arresting people. When his tour with the Navy ended, he returned home and enrolled at the University of Houston, majoring in Sociology and minoring in Criminology. Upon graduation, he immediately joined the Houston Police Department. He served briefly in the traffic division but was transferred because he didn't like to write tickets, unless the malefactor was an off-duty officer. This happened twice. As a consequence of the many trips he made to the office of the Chief of Police, he became acquainted with his secretary - Miss Betty Sue Lowe, of the Chidester, Arkansas Lowes. They married on October 18, 1963 and their first son, Bo, was born nine months and eight days later. It was a real nail-biter.

For most of his tenure with HPD, Johnny worked as a homicide detective,

gaining a reputation as a skilled interrogator who was able to break the toughest of suspects. He confessed, however, that most suspects didn't really need any coercion. He would just say, "You are the husband [or the boyfriend]. You did it. Would you like to tell me how?" In the late 1960s, he was assigned to Intelligence, investigating things like fraud and organized crime. Then, he took an extra job with the Humble Oil Company, chiefly investigating credit card fraud. In 1971, he left the police department to go to work for Humble fulltime.

He moved to Magnolia in 1973 with his wife Betty, his three children – Bo, Tracy, and Fred – and his mother, Velma. Even though he didn't arrive there until he was 41-years-old, in Magnolia he found his real hometown. Over the course of the next five decades, it was his joy to serve this community. He became a member of the First Baptist Church, then, a few years later, a deacon. His neighbor invited him to a meeting of the Lions' Club, and he became a Lion. His sons played baseball and he became a volunteer with Magnolia Little League, then an umpire and then part of the board. He became involved, "hip deep" his wife Betty would say, in local politics. He smoked brisket and sausage for almost every local race and he almost always supported the winning candidate. But he never denied brisket to anyone, regardless of political affiliation. In Texas, brisket transcends politics. He ran for the Magnolia Independent School District board of trustees and won. Then he served on the board of the Texas Association of School Boards, which doesn't sound like a thing but is. He served on the school board for many years. Then he ran again and lost. This broke his heart, but only for a time. Just few weeks later, he was back at the barbecue pit.

He was a committed blood donor who donated 57 gallons of blood with the Houston Blood Center. He volunteered to help with the Special Olympics and then with Bridgewood Farms. He worked with the Magnolia Historical Society, which is fitting, since he was so much a part of the town's most recent half century. And all along the way, he collected friends – so many that they are almost beyond counting. He died at his home in Magnolia on August 25, 2021.

Like Abraham, Johnny breathed his last and died at a good old age, an old man and satisfied.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Velma, his father, Johnny, and his precious wife Betty, who passed away in 2007. He is survived by his children and grandchildren:

Dr. John Bowrell (“Bo”) Rollins, his wife Sabra, and their sons Jonathan Franklin (“Franky”) Rollins and David Lincoln Rollins;

Tracy Michelle Rollins and her daughter Alexandra (“Sasha”) Mkrтчyan and son Samvel (“Sam”) Mkrтчyan;

Fred Easley Rollins, his wife Deanna, and their daughter Allison Lynn (“Ally”) Rollins; and

James Harris (“Jimmy”) Brown, his wife Tina, and their son James Cody Brown.

The family asks that, in lieu of flowers, donations be made to Bridgewood Farms, A Caring Community for Teens and Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Montgomery County (<https://bridgewoodfarms.org/donate/>).

The Addison family and staff of Magnolia Funeral Home extend condolences to Johnny's family and friends during this difficult time.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP 4. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Magnolia Funeral Home  
811 South Magnolia Blvd.  
Magnolia, TX 77355  
(281) 356-3363  
magnoliafh@yahoo.com  
<https://magnoliafunerals.com>

## Funeral Service

SEP 4. 2:00 PM (CT)

Magnolia Funeral Home  
811 South Magnolia Blvd.  
Magnolia, TX 77355  
(281) 356-3363  
magnoliafh@yahoo.com  
<https://magnoliafunerals.com>

## Burial

SEP 4 (CT)

Magnolia Memorial Gardens Cemetery  
811 South Magnolia Blvd.  
Magnolia, TX 77355  
(281) 356-3363  
magnoliafh@yahoo.com  
<https://magnoliafunerals.com>

# Tribute Wall

MH

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



**magnolia Funeral Home** - September 10, 2021 at 11:14 AM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket* was purchased for the family of Johnny Rollins.



September 02, 2021 at 04:23 PM

MJ

“ *Mundy & James* purchased the *Beautiful in Blue* for the family of Johnny Rollins.



**Mundy & James** - September 01, 2021 at 11:25 PM



“ *Small Garden Dish* was purchased for the family of Johnny Rollins.



August 27, 2021 at 05:36 PM

KR

“ I was Blessed to help care for Johnny back in 2020. As people age, and memory loss settles in, you find out who they really are. They drop the pretences that we all show the outside world and say what they really think. Mr. Johnny was such a good soul. He was kind. He loved people. He loved his wife, his family, and most importantly, he loved God. One morning, he was 1/2 awake and 1/2 asleep and he was praying. He just said, "I love you Lord, thank you for loving me." Then he went back to sleep. He was a special soul. My prayers and love go out to Bo, Sabra, and all of the family. 🙏❤️

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**Kimberly Robinson** - August 27, 2021 at 08:01 AM