

***In Memoriam
Tommy Shearrer
(1954-2012)***

The field of weather modification has lost a true advocate and he will be sorely missed. Tommy Shearrer passed away in Pleasanton, Texas on October 12, 2012. Tommy was born and raised in Pleasanton and was a fifth-generation Texan. His dedication to his family was obvious, as his sons, parents, and brothers all lived within close proximity.

He spent his entire life working with agriculture, from growing up on a dairy farm to raising his own cattle to working with peanuts for over 30 years. The dependence of agricultural areas on sufficient rainfall to survive led Tommy to a chance meeting with people from San Angelo in the mid-90s who were promoting cloud seeding as a means to supplement rainfall. As a result of this meeting, he helped found the South Texas Weather Modification Association in 1996. He was the manager of the project from the beginning up until his untimely death.

He was instrumental in the development of other weather modification programs in Texas into the early 2000s. The concept that naturally-occurring rainfall could be enhanced for the benefit of people to decrease groundwater pumping or help recharge reservoirs and aquifers appealed to Tommy. This propelled his drive to reach a goal where cloud seeding programs were as commonplace as local fire and police departments.

Tommy brought his passion and energy to the Weather Modification Association. He served on a committee and was president of the Weather Modification Association in 2006-2007. He lobbied in Washington, D.C. to generate federal interest and funding for weather modification.



Tommy with his wife, Sharon

His love of cloud seeding led him to be a part of numerous media stories, bringing a unique perspective to the field. Tommy was also very active outside of weather modification. He owned a successful construction company and was also a peanut grader.

Tommy's deep belief in God perpetuated his positive outlook on life, even in trying times. His activities extended into his church where he was an elder and taught adult Sunday school. His involvement in the community continued into numerous other organizations, among them past board member of the Evergreen Underground Water Conservation District, the president of the Pleasanton Airport board, an ex-County Commissioner of Atascosa County, former member of Alamo Area Council of Governments, and director of Texas Ag Finance.

Tommy never let the "small stuff" bother him. He always approached problems with a cautious, clear mind which allowed him to truly understand the topic at hand. Tommy had many people that depended on him for his wisdom both in and outside the weather modification community. His motto was, "Just another day in paradise" and those who knew him were very familiar with this saying. It didn't matter if times were easy or tough, he would always live by this credo.