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Subject: Jimmy Ray Parham

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Sat, 29 Aug 2009 21:09:03 GMT

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My Dad died Thursday at 5:30pm. He was out working in his yard, because he liked keeping it nicely landscaped. He finished up, came inside, felt light of breath, and died. Mom comforted him with a damp cool towel, and held him as he passed.

In the 1950's, Dad loved automobiles. He knew every make and model by sight. In high school, he dated my Mom, whose family owned the Chrysler/Plymouth dealership (back then, also Studebaker and Packard). She was the perfect girl for him.

Naturally, Dad worked in the car business too, early on in the parts department at Volkswagen dealerships in Texas and Oklahoma. He worked his way up into management and eventually to being General Manager and partner, owning part of the business. He opened the first real Porsche dealership in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1972.

Dad's dealership, Precision Imports, was really something. It had the most stylish showroom and the coolest cars. The 1970's were a time when German automobiles were becoming more and more powerful. In 1976, Porsche introduced the now famous Turbo Carrera. Peter Gregg (car number 59, the Brumos Porsche almost every model replicates) was a personal friend and we hung out in the pit when he ran at Hallett. Dad's picture was in Time Magazine, as he was named one of the top dealers in the country. These were heady times.

What is probably most impressive about my Dad is even when his career was approaching its Zenith, he never lost his approachability or his genuine bond with life-long friends and family. When my high school buddies went to get their first car, Dad was usually the one to get it for them. Cars are a sort of passage, from boy to man, and he knew how important that was. Most of us got our first car and some of us even got our first jobs from him. He put wheels under us so we could get to school, to our first jobs and on ours first dates. Dad took care of us.

Most of all, the thing I'll miss most is the cookouts, the knowing that when I got to Mom and Dad's house every few weeks or so, Dad would be out on the porch cooking on the grill. I won't ever see him standing on the porch like that again. We spoke on the phone usually at least once a week and got together at least once a month. We were buddies. He was an impressive man and all that, but the thing I'll miss most is the simple stuff. I'll just miss seeing him.