



## Obituary



### **Robert Lee Nieman, Jr. (Bobby)** **1947-2009**

Robert Nieman of Longview, Texas, passed from this life to his eternal home on October 17, 2009.

Bobby was born June 11, 1947, in McLeansboro, Illinois. He was the son of Robert Sr. and Wandafern Webb Nieman. He graduated from Martin High School and attended the University of Tennessee at Martin. On August 31, 1968, he married Donna Brown. Together they

owned and operated Trailer Delivery Service.

He was a historian, a co-author of books with Texas Rangers, a columnist, and the leading authority on the 1937 New London School Explosion. For more than 10 years he was the volunteer managing editor of the online *Texas Ranger Dispatch Magazine*. Bobby sat on the board of directors of The Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco, The Texas Ranger Association Foundation, and the board of directors of the New London Museum.

He was preceded in death by his parents. He was survived by his beloved wife Donna, who also passed the next year, daughter Stacey Nieman Fleming, granddaughters Madison and Allissa, a sister and brother-in-law, Debbie and Lynn Simpson, mother-in-law, Frances Brown, sister and brother-in-laws Elizabeth and Durwood Worley and Danny Brown and several nieces and nephews, uncles Kermit and Ron Lee Webb, aunts Mary Thomas and Judy Wood.



### **"No Better"**

We are deeply saddened to report the passing of Robert "Bobby" Nieman, friend and Managing Editor of the Texas Ranger Dispatch. Bobby departed doing what he loved best, preparing to deliver a paper on the history of the Texas Rangers at a history conference.

Bobby was the "gold standard" for avocational historians, and he left a permanent legacy in his efforts to preserve Texas Ranger history. He worked incredibly hard to publish and save what he called "horseback Ranger history," but his real love was "motorized" Ranger history from the 1920s on. Few historians explore this era, and none with his dedication and enthusiasm. Bobby had an

endless supply of stories about Rangers such as Bob Goss, Lonewolf Gonzales, Bob Mitchell and others. He knew that, as the old Rangers went on to their reward, much of this history would be lost. He became a man with a mission—to publish as much as he could and record as much oral history as possible. The articles in the *Texas Ranger Dispatch* and an oral history program were the result.

Since 1999, we had the privilege of working with him to realize his dream of a Ranger history magazine. He lived to celebrate the 30th issue. Sadly, we had no idea that that milestone issue would be his last.

Bobby was also the organizing force behind an oral history program to record the reminiscences of former Rangers. After his wife and family, Bobby's greatest love was saving Texas Ranger history for future generations.

When we talked about the aches and pains that come with getting older, Bobby always responded with a wry smile and his favorite phrase -- "it don't get no better."

When it came to dedication to Texas Ranger history it "didn't get no better" than Bobby Nieman.

Byron A. Johnson, Executive Director  
Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum

