

Echoes from the Past

# The Son of Two Sheriffs

David V. Harris is in the unique position of being the son of two different elected Gaines County Sheriffs. How is this possible, you ask?

Quite simply, he is the son of V.A. Harris who was elected sheriff after the death of "Bob" McReynolds. McReynolds was killed in a car wreck in 1953. His wife, Mantie, finished out his term of office through 1954. When the next election was held, V.A. Harris was elected and took office January 1, 1955. So, David Harris was the son of Gaines County Sheriff, V.A. Harris. This takes care of one sheriff in David's ancestry, but what about the second one?

The second sheriff in David's lineage was not his father. His father, V.A., held office until 1958 when he was stricken with a heart attack during the first trial in the then new Gaines County Courthouse, a murder trial. He died the next day. His wife, David's mother, Mary Harris, took over his term and finished it out. When election time came, two men ran against Mary for the office, but Mary was elected.

The family was at first told she was the first lady to be elected to the office of sheriff in Texas, but later were told she was the sixth lady to be elected to the office. So, you see, David Harris had the privilege of being the son of two different elected Gaines County Sheriffs.

One might wonder why David never sought the office of Sheriff, or got into some form of police work. He said he did consider it at one time, and had an opportunity to get into law enforcement, but after further consideration, decided not to make the change.

David was born in Lamesa while his family lived in Loop. They moved to Seagraves in 1946, and then to Seminole in 1955. He was named after his dad who had a twin sister. His dad's initial, V, is for the name, Valta and his twin sister's name was Alta. David's middle name is Valt.

David was too young when his dad died to remember a lot about him, but he does remember he used to ride in his patrol car with him at times. This was allowed in those days.

One particular incident stood out in his memory. He was riding with his dad after dark when A.V. received a call to investigate a suspected gambling and drinking party in Seagraves. It was in the black section of town, and when he pulled up in front of the

house, A.V. told David to stay in the car. David was scared so he locked the doors.

His dad knocked on the door but no one answered. He could hear them scurrying around inside and figured they were trying to escape so he kicked the door in and David said, "people came pouring out of the house running in every direction." That was how his dad broke up a gambling ring.

David went to school, up to the third grade, in Seagraves. They moved to Seminole when A.V. got on with the Gaines County Sheriff's Department. David finished school in Seminole and graduated in May of 1965. His first classroom was in the old primary building, the one which was just recently torn down. He played football in junior high and his freshman year but then got too involved in Agriculture to have time for sports. He said enjoyed feeding pigs and sheep and calves which he showed at the Fat Stock Shows.

Not long after his graduation, he got his call from Uncle Sam to come and be examined for the military. The war in Vietnam was just starting and it was the peak of the draft period. They were taking just about everyone. He graduated from high school in May and was drafted in November of 1965.

He was taken into the US Army and spent 11 months in Vietnam. His was the first full division to arrive in Vietnam when the combat units were deployed. He said, "It seemed like we were over there for no reason."

They arrived in August of 1966 and came back in July of 1967. He was taken in the US Army the day before Thanksgiving and discharged the day before Thanksgiving two years later. Interestingly, his trip to Vietnam by ship took 17 days, and his trip home by airplane took 17 hours.

After his discharge he came back to Seminole and went to work for Pioneer Natural Gas Co. which became Energas and is now, Atmos Energy. He was a plant operator meaning he did all kinds of jobs.

In 1968 he was married to Lynn Emfinger. Their marriage lasted 23 years but ended in a divorce in 1991.

When they married he was earning \$350 a month. They rented a two bedroom house for \$45 a month plus utilities which brought the bill to \$50 or \$60. He had a car payment of \$99 a month. They moved to Ozona and he got a \$25 a month raise and he thought they were well off.

They came back to Seminole in 1989 and he went to work in the oil field. He worked for Bonner Hoffman which became Key Energy. He quit them in 2007 and worked for RWI, (Ron's

Welding Inc.), out of Hobbs, New Mexico.

He had driven hot oil trucks for 21 years when a job came open with Pate Trucking in 2011. He took the job and has been with Pate a little over a year and a half, now.

David Harris has two sons, Clay and Trey who both went through school in Seminole.

Clay has three kids, a son and two daughters. Austin is a senior at Seminole High School, and Madison is in the eighth grade. McKinley is five and starting kindergarten this year.

Trey is married to Kim (Jones), and they have two kids. Their son Trevin is a freshman and is on the freshman football team. He enjoys all sports. Kalley is in fourth grade and she participates in gymnastics.

David enjoys hunting and fishing and is joined in this by Trey and Trevin. They have a deer lease in Turkey.

When David was working for the gas company in Seminole, he recalled in 1975 a regulator malfunctioned, (may have froze up), and the gas went off in every house in Seminole. They had to shut off every meter in town and then turn them on again after the problem was fixed. This took two and a half days, but he said the people were all real nice about it.

On another occasion he received a call around midnight from a little old lady who told him, "I've got monsters coming out of my gas line." She told him she could feel these monsters trying to get hold of her. He went to her home and checked the gas line out, and assured her there were no monsters coming out of her gas line.

Among David's many duties when working for Pioneer was installing gas yard lights and grills, reading meters all over the southern part of the county, which took about ten days each month. They also sold and installed gas air conditioners.

"After a while," he said, "Every weekend someone would call in saying their air conditioner had gone out." He had to go work on it.

David said his real hobby is, "Hanging out with my long horned cattle." He has five cows, one bull and three calves. They are red and white and some of their horns are four feet from tip to tip. He says these cattle are very gentle and docile. The biggest problem they pose is getting them into a stock trailer. He says you can't load more than two of them in a trailer at a time because of their long horns.

Harris has no immediate plans for retirement, and says he has no plans for leaving Seminole. He calls Seminole people, "The best people in the world," and says he has enjoyed living here.



Prices Good Thru 11/03/12

706 S Main St, #106, Seminole, 432-758-9888  
 Hwy 62-180 & NW 11th, #264, Seminole, 432-758-6331  
 1107 Railroad Ave, #178, Seagraves, 806-546-2068

BUY A  
**Hatch Green Chili & Cheese Burrito**

AND GET AN ORDER OF 2 TAQUITAS FREE

**MORE GREAT DEALS**

Allsup's Sandwich Bread 24 oz. .... 89¢ each or FOR	<b>2 \$1.59</b>	Powerade Sports Drinks 32 oz. ....	<b>2 \$2.50</b>
Allsup's Wheat Bread 24 oz. .... \$1.09 each or FOR	<b>2 \$1.89</b>	Snyder's Chips	<b>\$1.09</b>
Kellogg's Cereal Cups each.....	<b>99¢</b>	Western Family Paper Towels roll.....	<b>3 \$2 FOR</b>
Coca-Cola Products 6 pack cans.....	<b>\$1.99</b>	Western Family Bath Tissue Petal Soft, 4 rolls.....	<b>2 \$2.50 FOR</b>

BUY 12 GALLONS OF FRESH ALLSUP'S MILK GET ONE FREE!

SAVE ON SLIM JIM .97 OZ. **\$1.29 ea.**

SAVE ON MTN DEW 24 OZ. **2 \$3 FOR**

SAVE ON RED BULL 16 OZ. **2 \$6 FOR**

SAVE ON Cheez-It Crackers 4.5 OZ. BUY ONE GET ONE FREE

BLUE BUNNY Ice Cream Sandwiches VANILLA, NEAPOLITAN, OR MISSISSIPPI MUD **79¢**

**Allsup's Hot Links 99¢ EACH**