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News Release

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Former Mayor Pro Tem Brad Lapsley succumbs at 93

MURPHY (August 3, 2021) Former Murphy Mayor Pro Tem Brad Lapsley died on July 27 at the age of 93. He is survived by Betty, his wife of 69 years, and five children.

Lapsley, a retired real estate broker, moved to Murphy in 1982 after a long and fruitful career as a missionary. Shortly after arriving in Murphy, he became active in civic endeavors, serving on the Planning & Zoning Commission, and the City Council. He was among the founders of the Murphy Historical Society and helped establish the group responsible for maintaining the Decatur Maxwell Murphy cemetery.

His active and selfless involvement in the civic life of Murphy repeated a pattern that Lapsley had set long before he arrived and took residence in the City.

For example, prior to his arrival in Murphy, he served as a trustee of the Dallas Independent School District Board, eventually rising to serve as the Board's President. He devoted long hours of his personal time and incalculable treasure to a wide variety of service and faith-based activities that resulted in improving the quality of life for people in Dallas and beyond.

A 16-year-old graduate of Woodrow Wilson High School in the Dallas ISD, he attended Wheaton College, transferring to SMU where he completed pre-med studies at the age of 20. Rather than continuing medical studies, Lapsley instead enrolled in the Dallas Theological Seminary in response to a spiritual call to become a missionary.

From 1954 to 1964, he and his young family moved to Ethiopia where they established a long and productive relationship with the people of that North African country. He established two schools for Ethiopian children and worked tirelessly to supply the schools' administrators and teachers with the tools, books, and other resources necessary for the educational success of the students.

His devotion to his faith led him to ensure that his beloved Ethiopian citizens were exposed to Christian-based principles and tenets. Further, knowing that learning and using the English language was essential for the country's population to be successful in international commerce, he sponsored the development and distribution of dual-language bibles, written in the local language (Amharic) side-by-side with English. This technique allowed readers to learn both scripture and the English language at the same time.

Known by his friends and associates as a jovial prankster, he was occasionally described as cantankerous, a description that he fondly agreed with.

Services were held on Aug. 2 at Grace Bible Church in Dallas with interment in Restland Memorial Cemetery in Dallas.

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ABOUT MURPHY -- Murphy is a fast-growing community located in Collin County. The population is approximately 20,010, generally characterized as highly educated with a median household income well above the state average. With more than 80 percent of the land developed, the community is dominated by single-family residences. City planners strive to preserve a family-oriented community with a strong sense of place. Money Magazine has dubbed Murphy as the 27th Best Place to Live in America for small cities, and D Magazine placed Murphy as the fifth best suburb in the 2014 list, where it has consistently ranked in the top 10.