

EUDOW HAMM: A PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE

Eudow Hamm was a quiet and gentle man with a love of God and life. He was born in Kentucky in 1924, graduated from high school, served in the Navy, and wound up in Florida, where he met and married Maybelle. Maybelle was an artistic regal lady who was the light of his life. Eudow was in law enforcement and excelled in his career, retiring as the Chief of the Miami Police Department in the 1970's.

Eudow and Maybelle loved nature so they bought a 35-acre farm with a modest house, but a wonderful view of the Smoky Mountains. They wintered in Florida and spent the rest of the year in Tennessee. The Hamm's joined Fox United Methodist Church in June 1976. Through the years they loved their ministers and their fellow members. Eudow even represented the church as a delegate to Annual Conference.

Cold weather took its toll on Maybelle's arthritis and they contemplated selling the farm. That's when Karen Whitlock, a local realtor, entered their lives. The property did not sell, but the relationship with Karen grew.

Years passed and Karen called about any interest in leasing the farm...this is when the bad news hit. Maybelle had a terminal brain tumor and the tears flowed. Maybelle was not concerned about herself, but about who would check on Eudow. Karen promised she would be there, which seemed to give Maybelle peace. After months of tender care from Eudow, Maybelle slipped into a coma and died..

Eudow continued to go back and forth between Florida and the farm. He was hard of hearing so Karen helped to get him set up with a computer, e-mail, and the internet. This opened



Eudow & Maybelle Hamm

a whole new world of information to Eudow and he and Karen began a nightly communication of world events, personal issues and the meaning of life. Eudow became a second father to Karen.

Eudow sold the Florida home in early 2006 and continued to love life cutting grass on his 1940's tractor and teaching Sunday school to the ladies class at Fox UMC. A summer cold led to pneumonia and a couple of hospitalizations. On his 82nd birthday, Karen had no other present so she reached into her closet and wrapped up a copy of Rick Warren's, *A Purpose Driven*

Life. He devoured the book...taking notes to share with his ladies class. When Eudow read the chapter about tithing, he got very concerned because he had not tithed. He told Karen that his blessings had come from God, that he needed to return God's money...and that he had something special in mind.

Eudow was still recovering in the hospital when an attorney and witnesses arrived to review and execute his plan. Eudow's estate plan included direct gifts to Karen, a niece in Florida, and two special friends. The remainder of his estate was "left to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ in the Holston Conference and throughout the land." Eudow died later that day within hours of executing his last will and testament.

Eudow and Maybelle graced everyone's life who came in contact with them. Now their gift, estimated to be between \$300,000 - \$400,000, will continue their life-long example of faith, love, empathy, and compassion by spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gift has been returned.