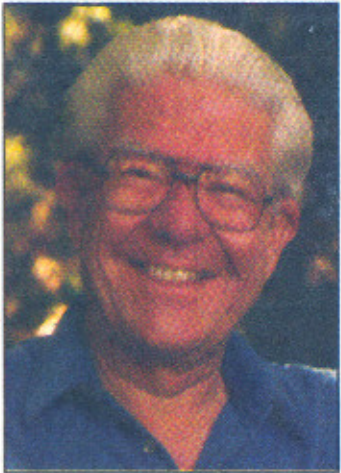


Radio Personality, Gibbs, Passes Away

By PennyLynn Webb

The voice of Crockett for over five decades, Jim Gibbs, passed away on Tuesday, January 8, at the age of 79. Thought of by most as a very kind gentleman, Gibbs will be truly missed. A Yankee by birth, growing up in Dover, Ohio, Gibbs became a permanent fixture in Texas in the 19540s. Not much is known as of why he chose Crockett for his radio station, a long time friend of Mr. Gibbs relayed a story to the Messenger that they heard Gibbs tell on many occasions stating, "At 19 years of age Gibbs decided that he wanted to own a radio station. He



Jim Gibbs

researched many towns across the country and decid-

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ed that Crockett, Texas would be the place that he would start that station. Many of the local business leaders of that time discouraged him. They didn't think that he would be able to make a go of it. But he went ahead and did it any way and founded KIVY in 1947." This friend went on to say, "In order to make a living Gibbs hired a man named Bill Carter to run the radio station and he took a job in Dallas as the news director for WFAA Channel 8. While he was working there he met his wife Betty."

Brothers Leon Hunt, who now own the station, and Lonnie Hunt, who works there as a morning personality, began their careers in radio under the tutelage of Gibbs in the early 1970s. Lonnie said of Gibbs, "He was easy to work for, easy to get along with." He went on to state, "I think one the greatest things he did was to keep KIVY as a local radio station. People still appreciate that and need that, especially in places like Houston County where there is no daily newspaper. In the 50 plus years that he owned the radio station, I can't think of anyone who has promoted Houston County as much as Jim Gibbs, through his radio station and by doing that he helped to make our county very successful."



Jim and Betty Gibbs

I remember one summer when we had our children's day camp, King's Kids, and Jim secured the theatre for a private matinee showing of Garfield. He made all that happen for around 30 kids two weeks in a row, touching over 60 lives with his generosity and taking time to videotape the kids walking from the church to the movies. Of course he stayed and watched Garfield both times and treated everyone to popcorn." Parker also relayed, "He had that Christian way about him that made everyone important to him. Many times I watched as he shook the hand of every youth in the back of the church. It didn't matter to him what gender or race they were, or if their pants fit or not ---he still shook their hand and let them know that they

the South will rise again." We looked at each other then at Jim to see that smile pop up on his face and of course we all busted out laughing. Words of wisdom seemed to be spoken with the actions of Jim Gibbs. He made his presence known everywhere... the dogs recognized his van when it drove up because he always had treats for them; the kids knew him and waived as he peered in on their lessons weekday afternoons at the church; and it just wasn't youth without Mr. Gibbs coming by several times; He bought enough lunches around town to feed a third world country for at least a decade."

On a personal note Parker continued, "Jim filled a gap in my daughter's life. A wonderful male role model, a second

When asked her thoughts on Jim Gibbs, Cindy Parker, former Youth Minister at First United Methodist Church, Crockett where Gibbs was a long time member stated, "Jim Gibbs gave definition to the word generous and meaning to the word "Terrific!" She went on to state, "Behind the scenes I have seen Jim help kids with their college education, help them buy their first car, and be a friend to them in so many ways. His life is a testimony to children, youth and adults of how to care about others. He was a life-lesson on unconditional love. It was real neat the way he paid the youth group's way to the movies but it was important that he came around to ask how they liked the show. It was neat that he bought their dinner on many occasions but important that he ate with us.

were important and it mattered that they were in church that day. I remember a sermon I wrote once that included an example of his openness and care. Jim stayed young mentally and spiritually. I would like to think the kids and I had a little something to do with that. It was always fun to share some of our lessons and experiences with him. More than once we had him on the speaker phone in the van on the way to Six Flags or somewhere for one reason or another. One time while studying the timeless wisdom of the Proverbs in Sunday School, Jim walked through the gym where we were and I asked him to give us some timeless words of wisdom. He paused just a second or two before saying, "Don't throw your Confederate money away....

grandfather figure that she had not had. He showed her enough love and attention to more than make up for anything that had been lacking in her life. He even drove to Sam Houston State University to visit her for lunch. She still tells of that blue van maneuvering around the campus as she directed him from her cell phone among the students and traffic. Jim was the person that was always on my side, whether that was deserved or not. Well... that goes back to that Christian attitude on life doesn't it? "I'm on your side," I can still hear him saying. I think now that it's a reminder that we always have someone on our side --- we don't always stop to realize it. Jim made you realize it and when he did it was a good feeling. The neat thing about Jim is that he touched enough lives that his spirit of care, love, and giving will continue for years to come. So in honor of Jim smile a lot, buy someone's lunch sometime, or just shake their hand and tell them they are terrific. That's what he would do."

*Happy 90th Birthday to
Sylvia Leamons Lively!!*

Sylvia Leamons Lively was born to William Duke Leamons and Mattie Anne Morehead Leamons on January 11, 1918 into a