

## The time of youth is short, but...

Written by News Desk  
Friday, 21 March 2014 14:52 -

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**By Art Parker, Editor**

Last Wednesday morning my cell phone rang while I was shifting gears in my truck scooting down Highway 14. I saw it was the Mayor calling and answered with my usual greeting of "What's up?"

Al Kelley had the tone in his voice that meant he was upset. "Mr. Ralph died," the Mayor said.

Kelley was talking about Ralph Hull a longtime leader in this community. The Lord called him home at the age of 90 but only after he served others faithfully throughout his life (Ralph's obituary is on page 14).

I met Ralph when I came to Millbrook and started The Independent in 2003. I first met him at a Millbrook Men's Club meeting. Ralph was the treasurer, a position he held through several U.S. President's. In fact, no one ever told me they could remember another treasurer of the Millbrook Men's Club other than Ralph.

That first meeting I attended I was amazed at how Ralph conducted the treasurer's business. He went through every penny spent since the last meeting and that included the \$1.98 spent on cookies the members munched on. Everyone was always tickled with Ralph and his reports but

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the club always knew that their money was in the best hands in Millbrook.

Over the years I listened to Ralph give his reports at meetings until he finally relinquished the position a few years ago when his health started to slow him down. I always thought of how much more citizens would trust their government if public officials took their tasks as seriously as Mr. Ralph.

I remember one time I didn't pay my Millbrook Men's Club dues on time and Ralph sent me a notice. When I went to the next meeting I told him I felt like I got a notice from the IRS and he laughed. He then told me to fork over my dues and said, "Make it cash buddy 'cause we don't take credit cards." It was all in fun and Ralph had a way of making you love him while he was getting the best of you.

Ralph served Millbrook in other ways and was on the city council a long time ago. (It is important to note that we have also lost other hard working community servants over the past dozen years.)

When I graduated from high school back in Birmingham (a million years ago) I remember our senior class President delivered a speech entitled, "The time of youth is short, but the spirit of youth reigns forever." I know Ralph had that youthful spirit until the day he departed. It is that spirit that builds cities and makes the future a better place. A great community servant has just left us, but he leaves behind a spirit for us to use and keep Millbrook moving forward.

So long Mr. Ralph. You leave behind many friends who love you and a community that thanks you for your service.

Next week The Millbrook Independent will begin its twelfth year of operation. We say thank you to all of those supporting the newspaper over the years and a special thanks to the advertisers that make sure this community has a newspaper of its own.

Also in this edition you will find the annual Home and Garden supplement, which we publish every March. My thanks for its production go to my better half and most important boss,

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Christine Parker, who always does a great job.