

### A Friend Remembered

By Glenn Miller

*The propane industry's Elder Statesman, Milford Therrell, passed away April 3. Instead of a traditional "Beyond the Mains" in this issue, we're printing his eulogy that was written and presented by Glenn Miller of Miller's Bottled Gas at Mr. Therrell's memorial service.*

**M**y name is Glenn Miller from Bowling Green, Ky. It has been my great pleasure to be one of Milford's best friends for some 40+ years.

This is a celebration of the life of Milford Therrell.

Milford exemplifies the great American dream to be successful. He was able to accomplish things in his lifetime that one would have thought to be impossible, even in America.

Milford was born in 1933, during the later days of the Great Depression. He was born to parents who, like many families of that time, were sharecroppers in North-Central Mississippi. All children of these sharecropping families were expected to work on the farm, so Milford knew what it was like to follow a mule to plow corn, cotton, and other crops. He also knew as a youngster what it was like to pick all of those crops, and to raise food for your family. He had a strong love for the land and what it did for the family, and he never forgot those roots—and definitely cherished them.

Milford was the first member of his family to receive a high school diploma and a college education. He served in the U.S. Navy, and used his V.A. benefits and worked to get through college.

After college, Milford got a job as a salesman for the Squibb-Taylor Co. in Memphis, Tenn. Thus began his introduction to, and involvement in, the propane industry. He traveled several states, including Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Any place Milford went he made friendships that lasted a lifetime. He was successful in sales, and was promoted to sales manager and moved to Dallas. Cecil and Cliff Squibb were mentors as well as friends. They had a philosophy that Milford adopted and took to a higher level, that of "If the marketers do good we will do good."

Milford believed that no matter what you did for your livelihood, you had to give back—you supported your

family, your church, your community, and your industry. Milford Therrell exemplified this in all areas of his life. Milford always said he had been lucky, that the good Lord takes care of little children and rednecks like us.

Milford rose in the ranks of our industry's state and national associations. He served on many committees, doing what some call the "grunt work" behind the scenes, and eventually came to the front, serving as an officer at both the state and national level.

As president of the national association, he introduced to us a vehicle by which we could raise funds for promotion within the industry. We had always failed to do this as a voluntary effort. Milford went back to his agricultural exposure, with the thought that if agricultural check-off programs like the cotton, beef, and milk councils' could work, why couldn't the propane industry have the same? Thus the move to create the Propane Education & Research Council was started. A federal law had to be passed to create this council. Most people thought it could not be done, but with Milford's persistent work and a lot of others' efforts, we eventually were successful in getting a bill through the U.S. House and Senate, and the rest is history. That effort by Milford, "The Father of PERC," now raises somewhere around \$50,000,000 a year to develop new uses for propane and promote the propane industry.

The scholarship foundation was another of Milford's, and his wife Gayle's, projects. Their efforts, with



**Glenn Miller and longtime friend Milford Therrell.**



Milford (right) with the employees of Squibb-Taylor Inc....



At a 1999 PERC meeting with Bill McHenry (right)...



Discussing clean fuels with Bob Myers and John Huffhines...



Rep. Billy Tauzin (left), Glenn Miller, Milford, and Matt Martinez address PERC issues...



1991 NPGA officers (left to right) Glenn Saunders, Ralph Rooney, Milford, Wayne Anderson...



Bill Clark (left), Milford, and Rich Bass socialize at a gathering during an NPGA convention...



Discussing the formation of PERC with Glenn Miller (left) and Rep. Billy Tauzin...

help from the industry, were responsible for producing somewhere around \$75,000 in scholarships last year for the children of employees in the industry, and it is still growing.

Milford has had a positive influence on this industry that will continue for generations in the future. He did give back unselfishly, and thank God for his life and friendship.

The Bible says that we are supposed to love our neighbor as ourself. Milford Therrell's life exemplified this in all of the areas he walked. He never met a child or a dog he did not like, and we who knew him know that was also true of us.



Milford could conduct business anywhere...