



"Lethal" Cecil Pettigrew

March 24, 1958 - September 15, 2022

Cecil Lee Pettigrew was born in a farm house in Tulsa, Oklahoma on March 24, 1958 to George and Juanita (née Cole) Pettigrew. He died at home on his farm surrounded by loved ones on September 15, 2022. Born the middle of 10 children, he embodied the Pettigrew value of hard work. While his father worked in the asphalt business, his mother and siblings ran the farm. Cecil, having spent long summers hauling hay on the farm, was well cross-trained for fall sports. As a Tulsa East Central High School Cardinal, he lettered in both football and wrestling and in 1977 was a member of the State Championship wrestling team. Upon graduation, he received scholarships for both sports and attended NEO A & M followed by Southwest Missouri State. Cecil was proud to be the first person in his family to graduate high school and attend college.

As a reluctant recruit while serving as security for the Whisker's Club, Cecil competed in and won Tulsa's first ever Tough Man (1980). It was on that night that fate would have him meet boxing coach, Cortez Nelson. As his mentor, Nelson's training elevated Pettigrew's South paw to compete nationally and internationally. "Lethal Cecil" finished his professional career in 1998 ranked 5th in the North American Boxing Federation with a professional boxing record of 41-17-2, including 32 knockouts.

In 1996, he embarked on a Personal Training career that spanned 27 years.

He believed that an individual's greatest investment was found supporting their health and that a community's greatest investment was found supporting its children. After having presented his vision and through the generosity of his personal training clients, the Cecil Pettigrew Foundation (501c3) was born. The Foundation, which was stewarded by both he & his wife Carrie, allowed Cecil to coach children regardless of their ability to pay and in many cases it afforded him the opportunity to bridge the gap for those where a parental presence was absent. Since its inception, hundreds of Oklahoma youth have been coached by "Lethal Cecil", many of whom, likely traded a life behind bars to be surrounded by his ropes, his love, and his discipline.

Outside of the ring, Cecil gave freely of his time and resources. He spent years coaching both Whitney and Foster Middle School football teams alongside friends, Leroy Breashers and Randy Kennedy. He was an avid outdoorsman, never hesitating to share his favorite fishing hole or deer stand with those he loved in and out of the ring. Although boxing had taken a significant toll on Cecil's health, he never complained. He simply showed up to cover his favorite corner of the ring where he saw everyone who entered, regardless of their story or station in life, as equally deserving of dignity and discipline.

In 2019 Cecil was inducted into East Central High School Hall of Fame where he and his wife Carrie are lifetime members of its Foundation. Out of all of his victories, he was most proud of the work he did to help those in his orbit. You would be hard pressed not to smile in his presence even as he was tagging you in the face or you were enduring the 100 degree heat of his Team Lethal Gym. He could be depended upon for a word of encouragement, an infectious laugh, and a bit of wisdom to set you straight. It is said that the great commission in life is to leave the world better than you found it. For those who knew him, they would attest that Uncle Cecil accomplished that right up until the final bell.

He is survived by his high school sweetheart and beloved wife Carrie, his partner in all things for 46 years; brother Isaiah Pettigrew (Cynthia); sister Sandra Dennis; brother Joseph Pettigrew; brother Robert Pettigrew; sister Anita Beregeron; brother Chris Pettigrew; father in-law William Leroy Richards (Ann); brother in-law Wendell Richards, D.O.(Ponna); a host of nieces, nephews, grand nieces, grand nephews; as well as his four-legged children, both small and large, that he loved and cared for on his farm.

He is preceded in death by his mother and father George and Jaunita Pettigrew; mother in-law Virginia Richards; brother Bernell Holland; brother George Pettigrew, Jr.; brother Reuben Pettigrew; and sister in-law Kim Richards.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Cecil Pettigrew Foundation (501c 3), COPES 2325 S. Harvard Tulsa, OK 74114, or any animal rescue program of your choice. A memorial celebration will take place in the coming weeks.

Tribute Wall



“ i miss you my brother. back in the day you would say you ready to rumble dave. only you know that i hung with you when you opened up full force but damn it was a real challenge.

David Bruza - June 07 at 08:47 AM



“ "Lethal" Cecil Pettigrew

October 23, 2023 at 01:21 AM



“ I had no idea. I boxed with Cecil for 2 years, around 2010. I truly loved that guy. So quick with a laugh. Unforgettable.

derek hamel - June 01, 2023 at 04:53 PM



“ PENNIE ANNE TURNER lit a candle in memory of "Lethal" Cecil Pettigrew



PENNIE ANNE TURNER - October 06, 2022 at 04:35 PM



“ I knew Cecil through my brother Ken Giddens, they boxed together, we also lived down the road on Garnett and would see that red station wagon drive by everyday. Kenny passed of Covid last year so I like to think they will spar again when they meet on the other side. God bless Pennie Turner

PENNIE ANNE TURNER - October 06, 2022 at 04:33 PM

JE

“ It was a great privilege and honor to have Cecil and Carrie as neighbors and friends all these years, I'll never forget him. They've been good to me
In ways I'll never be able to repay! I am
Lucky to have the memories I have from hunting to the one time I remember working out at their gym, it was the best workout I've ever had! No lie, I thought I was going to stroke out lol. Great great people and a great man gone too soon in my opinion!!

jerad - September 21, 2022 at 09:35 PM

CP

“ Chad Pilar purchased the Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant for the family of "Lethal" Cecil Pettigrew.



Chad Pilar - September 21, 2022 at 07:13 PM



“ truly 1 the best human being I have had the honor to know. I'll miss you my brother. once again you knocked the wind out of me. 8(

Chad Pilar - September 21, 2022 at 07:06 PM

DR

“ To understand Cecil's influence I would like to relate 3 true stories.

I was speaking to this young banker one day and he related to me how in high school he was bullied every day to the point he did not want to live anymore. Then one day out of the blue one of Cecil's boxers entered the area where the bullying was carried out and informed the two bullies that if they did not stop they would have to answer to him. He said from that day forward he was never bullied again. The remarkable thing to him was that he hardly knew this guy.

Cecil loved stories like that.

One day a very distraught mother brought her two teenage boys into the gym. The boys were out of control flunking out of school and a call from a teacher or principle was a daily occurrence. Within three months the young men were making straight A's and had become productive students as well as gotten weekend jobs at a movie theater.

Another young man had some esteem issues and after joining the gym in short order began to gain his confidence and went on to be very successful in his field. he recently completed a multimillion dollar project for Jerry Jones.

Other honorable mention's are a West Point graduate former Green Beret who now works for the State Department, a Major in the US Army that as a young lieutenant would instruct his men in the way of the Cecil until his superiors told him that was not a good idea, and a Young woman who went on to be the 2nd strongest women in the world as well as a director for a fortune 1 company. (a former marine and OHP trooper said she hit him harder than any man ever had).

You could also make the case that some of TU's better teams had a nucleus of players that were trained by Cecil.

This is just a tip of the iceberg of the influence Cecil had on countless Young men and women in our area.

Without a doubt he will be missed.

Derek Rader



Derek Mitchell Rader - September 21, 2022 at 12:18 PM

VA

“ *I am honored and privileged to have been in Cecil’s orbit. We will meet again my friend. With love and gratitude.*

Vicki Adams - September 21, 2022 at 05:53 AM

MC

“ *What an amazing man, you will be missed my friend. Prayers for comfort for your family. A true Tulsa Icon!*

mike clark - September 20, 2022 at 11:26 PM

AS

“ *Thought and prayers for the family and friends . Cecil you will be missed by so many . You will always hold a special place in our hearts ❤️*
Love the Smith Family

Anthony and Britney Smith - September 20, 2022 at 10:16 PM



“ *It is our honor and privilege to serve the Pettigrew family and to provide this permanent tribute website in memory of Lethal.*



Hayhurst Funeral Home - September 18, 2022 at 01:43 PM



“ *We love you Uncle Lethal Cecil... big UNC. See you in paradise. We can't wait to see that smile. Love Shaun and Yari!*



Yerissa Cruz-Olden - September 16, 2022 at 10:29 PM