

OBITUARY

DAVID WILSON FRANKLIN

Businessman paralyzed in diving accident was mentor to others

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Staff Writer

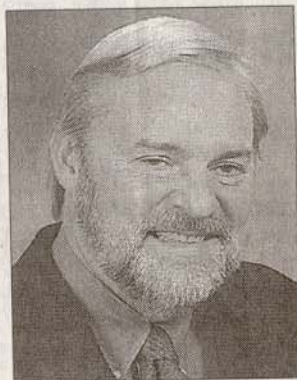
David Wilson Franklin refused to yield to his doctor's 1969 prognosis that he would be bedridden the rest of his life.

Then a 26-year-old businessman and father, Mr. Franklin had broken his neck in a diving accident at Cedar Creek Lake. Paralyzed from the shoulders down, he wasn't expected to get out of bed.

But once he set his mind to recover, Mr. Franklin defied the experts to live a productive life that included mentoring other people facing overwhelming prospects.

Mr. Franklin, 62, died Sunday of brain cancer at his Dallas home.

A memorial will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday at University Park United Methodist Church, 4024 Caruth Blvd. Visitation will be from 5 to 8 tonight at Restland Fu-



neral Home. Burial will be at Restland Memorial Park in a private ceremony before the memorial.

"He was a stubborn, determined man," his wife, Chrys Franklin of Dallas, remembers fondly. "He was handicapped, but there were no barriers."

Born in Dallas, Mr. Franklin was athletic in his youth. He swam a

mile when he was 12 years old and was a member of Highland Park High School's 1957 state championship football team.

He received a bachelor's degree from Southern Methodist University. As college students in 1965, he and Clyde Jackson founded Mister Sweeper, which cleans parking lots for businesses.

Mr. Jackson, now a Dallas developer, maintained the sweeping business while Mr. Franklin had months of rehabilitation after his accident.

"David built it up from there," Mr. Jackson said. "He has done an amazing job of taking this kind of business and building it up until it is one of the largest in the Southwest.

"To overcome the handicap he had and to do what he did took tremendous determination," Mr. Jackson said.

Mr. Franklin had several patents that helped his businesses prosper, Mr. Jackson said. In the early 1970s, Mr. Franklin invented a commercial pavement sweeper that most any vehicle can tow.

He also developed computer software — for another of his companies, Summary Systems Inc. — that monitors fleet vehicle travel.

Mr. Franklin was an active, lifetime member of University Park United Methodist Church, where he twice served as chairman of the administrative board. His other church activities included serving as a lay reader and chairman of committees for stewardship, evangelism, staff and worship.

He also served on the boards of the Salvation Army and the United Way in Dallas, his family said. In 2001 he was appointed to the Texas Council on Purchasing From Peo-

ple With Disabilities.

Mr. Franklin was also "a great counsel to people," his wife said. "He had a real gift for knowing when men or women needed a word of encouragement.

"When someone like David doesn't give up, you can't very well say, 'Well, I can't do that,'" Mrs. Franklin said.

In addition to his wife, Mr. Franklin is survived by two daughters, Kelly Franklin Bagnall and Amy Woods, both of Dallas; a sister, Gayle Barker of Dallas, Texas 75247; and four grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to University Park United Methodist Church, 4024 Caruth Blvd., Dallas, Texas 75247, or the Visiting Nurse Association, 1440 W. Mockingbird Lane, Suite 500, Dallas, Texas 75247.

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