



## James Michael Appling Sr.

July 14, 1945 - June 11, 2021

James Michael Appling Sr. (Mike, Dad, Papa) was born July 14, 1945 and passed peacefully into the Lord's arms on June 11, 2021. He is survived by his loving wife Dianne of 35 years, sons Mike Jr. and wife Leslie, George and partner Brian, son Todd Respondek and wife Holly, daughter Lisa Holt, grandchildren Claire, Luke, Arya, Gareth, Gaia, Michaela, Riley and Augustus as well as scores of cousins, nephews and nieces. He is also survived by his brother John Paul Appling and wife Jayne Gaye and sister Nancy Kennedy as well as step-daughter, Kelly Appling and her daughter, Maddy. He is preceded in death by his father and mother George and Louella Priesmeyer Appling and his older brother, George Jr.

Michael is a lifelong resident of El Campo, TX. He had so much pride for the community and its people. He graduated El Campo High School in 1963 and Texas Lutheran College in 1967. He went to work in the family business which owned Appling Brothers and the Pearl Beer distributorship. He worked with his Dad George, brother John Paul and sister and brother-in-law Nancy and Roy Redwine. The business was very successful and ultimately transitioned to younger cousins as he started into a second career in 1978 by buying into Troy Lively & Associates which ultimately became J. Michael Appling & Associates in 1983.

In August 1986, he and Dianne were married and blended a family of 5 children. Dianne joined the staff at J. Michael Appling & Associates and they worked together 25 years until she retired.

They enjoyed gambling trips to Las Vegas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and the Northeast. They also traveled to all 50 states; 48 by car, one by airplane, and one by ship. They felt so fortunate to be able to enjoy extensive travel to Mexico, the Caribbean, and Europe. Thirty-five international destinations in all, and some more than once.

He loved his work associates and clients and never really retired after he sold the business as he just had too much fun going up to the office and drinking coffee with his

friends. He is an avid sports fan and has seen more El Campo football games than most anyone other than his brother John Paul. He went to many sporting events of all types and regardless of event went to every one of his children and grandchildren events possible. This included football, basketball, tennis, baseball, softball, swimming, soccer, track, choir, theatre, Derby Dolls, dance recitals, dance competition and Sherwood Forest Faire. He totally surprised Mike Jr. by showing up to his first college game for Texas Lutheran even though he knew he made the travel team, but wouldn't play unless someone was hurt. He said, "If there is a chance you play your first college game I will be here" and he faithfully went to many games.

He was a long time member of so many charitable organizations and in most cases served on their boards and donated countless hours and support to make them successful. They include Christ Lutheran Church, El Campo Health Facilities Development Corporation, West Wharton County Hospital District, El Campo Medical Foundation, El Campo Memorial Hospital Board of Directors, Academic Booster Club, El Campo Little League, El Campo Bowling Center, El Campo Country Club, El Campo Chamber of Commerce, El Campo Elks Lodge, El Campo Museum of Natural History and El Campo Economic Development Corporation.

In particular, his 42 years of service to the El Campo Hospital is something he was very proud of and his family felt very blessed that his last day on this earth was in a place that he helped build surrounded not only by his family, but many employee partners that also knew first hand his leadership, nurturing nature but also a passion and competitiveness that helped that institution thrive for many years and is set up to succeed for many years to come. He was so generous and helpful to so many people that he was named El Campo Citizen of the Year in 2018. He will always be remembered by so many as such a kind and loving family member and friend. His legacy will be endless through his family, extended network of friends and business associates he helped succeed, the younger people he mentored in some cases many years and his immeasurable impact of his community involvement and dedication to El Campo.

The family will receive friends from 5-7 p.m. Wednesday, June 16 at Triska Funeral Home. The funeral service begins 10 a.m. Thursday, June 17 at Christ Lutheran Church with the Rev. Wayne Clement officiating. Burial will follow at Holy Cross Memorial Park.

Serving as pallbearers will be J. Paul Appling, Mark Appling, Turk Krennek, Mike Payne, Gary Lowrimore, Chu Nguyen, Travis Cobb, Derral Garrett and J.J. Croix.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the St. Phillips Catholic School

(302 W. Church St., El Campo), Christ Lutheran Church (1401 Ave I, El Campo) or Houston Hospice - El Campo (1102 N Mechanic, El Campo).

Triska Funeral Home, El Campo, 979-543-3681

# Cemetery Details

## Holy Cross Memorial Park

US Hwy 59 and Mechanic St.  
El Campo, TX 77437

# Previous Events

## Family Will Receive Visitors

JUN **16.** 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Triska Funeral Home  
612 Merchant Street  
El Campo, TX 77437-3440  
(979) 543-3681  
triskafh@sbcglobal.net

## Funeral Service

JUN **17.** 10:00 AM (CT)

Christ Lutheran Church  
1401 Ave I  
El Campo, TX 77437

# Tribute Wall

DZ

“ Sending heartfelt Prayers to the Family, I am so deeply sorry for your loss. Mike was an amazing giving person, with a huge heart! God Bless.  
- Diana Zabodyn



Diana Zabodyn - June 25, 2021 at 01:38 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..



June 18, 2021 at 05:00 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..



June 17, 2021 at 11:08 AM

CR

“ Cindy Riha lit a candle in memory of James Michael Appling Sr.



Cindy Riha - June 16, 2021 at 11:46 PM

PT

“ Pat Taylor lit a candle in memory of James Michael Appling Sr.



Pat Taylor - June 16, 2021 at 09:19 PM

RT

“ Roy&Diana Tudor lit a candle in memory of James Michael Appling Sr.



Roy&Diana Tudor - June 16, 2021 at 05:37 PM

JR

“ Judy Rohan lit a candle in memory of James Michael Appling Sr.



Judy Rohan - June 16, 2021 at 05:05 PM

CR

“ My memory of Michael is of his kindness. Blessings to his family'  
Carole Henderson Rodes

Carole Rodes - June 16, 2021 at 10:09 AM

CB

“ Mike always made one feel you were his best and only friend whether business or pleasure. He was a very smart guy and always solved whatever problem was presented. Dianne, your world will be upside down now and a new chapter will begin. Know all the days with Mike will become treasured memories. Be thankful of the life you shared with your buddy for however many years you had but know there would never be enough. He will be remembered with so many smiles and stories of laughter. I lift up prayers for the whole Appling family for peace and comfort.

Toodie Brady

carol maureen brady - June 15, 2021 at 09:42 PM

DT

Mike was one of my Dad's favorite students and friend as well as me and my family. He will be missed but then there's Heaven. What a day that will be! David Thigpen

David Thigpen - June 17, 2021 at 12:50 AM

JH

“ *John. Horner purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..*



John. Horner - June 15, 2021 at 07:19 PM

LK

“ *Linda Kram lit a candle in memory of James Michael Appling Sr.*



Linda Kram - June 15, 2021 at 05:42 PM

LK

*Sending prayers for the family & friends. May Mike Rest In Peace. Ken & Linda Kram*

Linda Kram - June 15, 2021 at 05:44 PM

MG

*My prayers and condolences to the entire family. Mike was my classmate and I remember him having a big heart full of kindness. He certainly left a large vacancy in El Campo. Now he can join all the angels in heaven and smile down upon all those who have wonderful lasting memories of him.  
Marilyn Kainer Guidry*

marilyn guidry - June 16, 2021 at 05:16 PM



“ *Serene Reflections Bouquet was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..*



June 15, 2021 at 02:57 PM

LM

“ *Lu Matzke lit a candle in memory of James Michael Appling Sr.*



Lu Matzke - June 15, 2021 at 01:49 PM

YF

“ *Your Southway Crane Family purchased the Enduring Grace for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..*



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**Your Southway Crane Family** - June 15, 2021 at 12:42 PM

SE

“ *Scott-Macon Equipment purchased the Your Light Shines for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..*



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**Scott-Macon Equipment** - June 15, 2021 at 11:50 AM

RK

“ *Thoughts and prayers for the Appling Family - We are so sorry for your loss Bill and Robin Kieth*

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**Robin Jacob Kieth** - June 15, 2021 at 11:41 AM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..*



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June 15, 2021 at 11:36 AM



“ *Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..*



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June 15, 2021 at 11:06 AM

VI

“ Vickie lit a candle in memory of James Michael Appling Sr.



Vickie - June 15, 2021 at 10:59 AM

VI

“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..



June 15, 2021 at 10:42 AM

MS

“ We are so sorry to hear that Mr. Appling, a very good man has passed.

*He was so much help to me in the past helping the El Campo Band Parents become tax exempt. He took care of everything for the 4 years that I was involved with it and never charged the organization a dime.*

*Deepest condolences to his family.*

Martin Strarup - June 15, 2021 at 09:23 AM

VI

“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..



June 15, 2021 at 08:14 AM

CR

“ Bob and I are at a lost for words. There are no words to describe Mike other than love. He was a genuine friend to all but we always felt the special friendship we shared with the two of you. May God hold you in the palm of his hand during these trying days and you feel his comfort. I know how strong you are Dianne and your faith will carry you forward. Love you, Bob and Carolyn Roy

carolyn roy - June 15, 2021 at 07:13 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..*



June 15, 2021 at 07:07 AM

BW

“ *Our condolences and expression of sympathy go out to the Appling Family, You are in our thoughts and prayers. He will be greatly missed, Bernice & Larry Wagner, Jr.*

**Bernice Wagner** - June 15, 2021 at 06:00 AM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..*



June 14, 2021 at 10:08 PM

LM

“ *Dear Dianne,  
Sending you and your family my deepest sympathy.*



**Lael Martin** - June 14, 2021 at 09:32 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..*



June 14, 2021 at 09:24 PM

AA

“ *When I worked at the country club, I loved when Mike & Diane would come in for late lunch. They were the nicest customers to serve. Glad I got to share in the Derby Doll experience with y'all too! El Campo is sure gunna miss you Mike!* —Aileen Avendano



**aileen avendano** - June 14, 2021 at 08:19 PM



“ *Greg Womack lit a candle in memory of James Michael Appling Sr.*



**Greg Womack** - June 14, 2021 at 08:14 PM



*Condolences to your family for your loss. My thoughts and prayers are with you at this time.*

**Greg Womack** - June 14, 2021 at 08:19 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..*



June 14, 2021 at 05:57 PM

JF

“ *Julie Strnadel & Family sent a virtual gift in memory of James Michael Appling Sr.*



**Julie Strnadel & Family** - June 14, 2021 at 05:55 PM

JM

“ My heart is saddened to hear the passing of Mr. Appling. He was always such a sweetheart and I when I would see him he always had a smile on his face. He will tremendously be missed. My deepest condolences to Diana and all the family. Praying for peace and comfort 🙏🙏

Janie Martinez - June 14, 2021 at 05:09 PM

TJ

“ We are so saddened to hear of Mike’s passing. My mom and dad (Troy and Jean Lively) loved Mike (and Dianne). After my dad died and mom moved away they always remembered mom on her birthday and holidays and often sent flowers. He was a sweetheart and will be missed. Blessings to Dianne and all the family and friends that will forever miss this wonderful man. My mom and dad have probably already welcomed him and got the party started. Troice and Jesse Jenckes.

Troice Lively Jenckes - June 14, 2021 at 04:53 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..



June 14, 2021 at 04:28 PM

GD

“ I am saddened and surprised to read about Mike’s death. I’ve known him and his family since he was eight years old and love the Applings. Diane, my heartfelt sympathy for you, he was your constant companion and best friend. You, among many, will miss him so much. John Paul, Nancy and family members, my prayers are with each of you and his many friends.

Gloria Dowden - June 14, 2021 at 04:21 PM

RJ

“ So so sorry for your loss Diane. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

Rae Ann

Rae Ann Johnson - June 14, 2021 at 04:16 PM

RJ

“ Rae Ann Johnson lit a candle in memory of James Michael Appling Sr.



Rae Ann Johnson - June 14, 2021 at 04:13 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..



June 14, 2021 at 04:03 PM

MK

“ Our condolences to Mikes family, he was a true El Campo icon.



Mike Knight - June 14, 2021 at 03:50 PM

KR

“ Krissi & Taylor Reid purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..



Krissi & Taylor Reid - June 14, 2021 at 01:44 PM

SP

“ Shirley Popp lit a candle in memory of James Michael Appling Sr.



Shirley Popp - June 14, 2021 at 01:39 PM

JH

“ *Jwan And Donald Henderson lit a candle in memory of James Michael Appling Sr.*



jwan and Donald Henderson - June 14, 2021 at 01:36 PM

CF

“ *Calvin, Vickie, Matt & the McRay Crane Family purchased the Large Basket Garden for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..*



Calvin, Vickie, Matt & the McRay Crane Family - June 14, 2021 at 01:03 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..*



June 14, 2021 at 01:02 PM

KK

“ *Kathryn Krpec lit a candle in memory of James Michael Appling Sr.*



kathryn krpec - June 14, 2021 at 12:40 PM



“ *Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of James Michael Appling Sr..*



June 14, 2021 at 12:37 PM

DI

“ Dianne,

*I am so sorry for your loss. Please know you are in my thoughts.*

*Diane Koehn*

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**Diane** - June 14, 2021 at 12:02 PM

SC

“ Scott, Kendra & Kambree Charbula lit a candle in memory  
of James Michael Appling Sr.



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**Scott, Kendra & Kambree Charbula** - June 14, 2021 at 11:29 AM