



Dr. E.L. "Sonny" Kutch

June 30, 1942 - February 9, 2022

Dr. E. L. Kutch, 79, of Caldwell, passed away on Wednesday, February 9, 2022, in the arms of his loving daughter, Renea.

Elza Leroy Kutch was known to family and friends as "Sonny," to patients and colleagues as "Doc," to his daughter as "Daddy," and to his grandchildren as "Granddaddy."

Sonny was born in Borger, Texas on June 30, 1942, to Elza Franklin and Mabel B (Crow) Kutch. He was raised in Perryton, Texas and loved the Panhandle. It was a very important part of who he was. He spent a lot of his childhood doing his favorite activity, waterskiing. He graduated from Perryton High School in 1960. He attended Texas Christian University from 1960-1962. He then transferred to The University of Houston to complete his doctorate in optometry. After he became a licensed health care professional, Dr. Kutch enlisted in the United States Army. He was a military optometrist and served as a Captain stationed in Fort Ord, California during the Vietnam Conflict. He was honorably discharged in 1968.

After leaving the military, he returned to Texas. He briefly lived in Lubbock before settling in Clear Lake to practice optometry. During his time in Clear Lake, he was a very active member of the Lion's Club and the Chamber of Commerce.

He fell in love with the most beautiful piece of property in Caldwell, Texas and purchased it in 1972, but continued to practice optometry in Clear Lake and visited his ranch as a get-away.

Sonny met the love of his life in 1977 and was married to Teresa Mae Thurman on June 10, 1978. They moved to Friendswood, Texas and he continued to practice optometry in the Houston area until they moved to their forever home on the ranch in Caldwell, Texas in 1984. He took great pride in taking good care of his wife. He always wanted to buy her a special piece of jewelry or take her out to a nice restaurant. He wanted to make sure she was safe, happy, healthy and would never have to worry about anything.

He opened two optometry practices: in Caldwell and Rockdale. He also worked in Temple, Waco, Killeen, Copperas Cove, Georgetown, Austin, Bastrop, Bryan, and College Station during his 50 years of practice. His patients were very important to him, and he often got to know them very personally. He took his time with each and every patient and never rushed an exam. He always wanted to make sure they were completely satisfied with their exam, their glasses or contact lenses, and their overall eye health.

He was an extremely hard-working man. He worked for 7 days a week in an office for many, many of those 50 years in practice. Outside of being a doctor, a very huge part of who he was, was a rancher. He owned Heart Bar Brangus Ranch. He had a beautiful herd of Registered Brangus cattle, and he was very picky about the cattle he purchased. He also loved a good cow dog and had many dogs over the years that he was very proud of. He was a member of the International Brangus Breeders Association, the Texas Brangus Breeders Association, and a life-time member of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

When he was not in the office, he was working hard on the ranch. He fed and took care of cattle, built and repaired fences all by hand, fertilized, cut, and baled high quality coastal hay. There were many times that he came home from the office and went straight to work in the pasture because there was a cow needing help calving, or because there was hay on the ground and rain was coming so he needed to get it baled. He never once complained about how hard he had to work to keep things going; he just did it and loved it.

He enjoyed music from a wide variety of genres, ranging from oldies to rock and roll, to country western. He didn't care what was playing as long as it had a good beat and was cranked up loud. He loved traveling and drove all over the place. His favorite trips were traveling from his home in Caldwell to his childhood home in Perryton and seeing how things had changed since the last time he made the trek. Sonny loved finding the best places to eat in whatever town he was in and always had a way of talking to the locals and finding a mom-and-pop kitchen with the greatest food.

He had a need for speed. He always loved fast cars and motorcycles. He always had a brand-new beautiful truck. It was usually a Ford, and it was usually bright red. He had the best quality trailers, tractors, and farm equipment that money could buy. He owned many Harley Davidson motorcycles and Ford Mustangs over the years and they were always his pride and joy. He took great care of them, always kept them clean, and parked as far away from other cars as possible to avoid dings and scratches – even if that meant he had to walk a mile to his destination. That's just the way he rolls, he would say.

There were a few things people knew him for, other than his ride. His perfectly groomed mustache. His jet-black hair, that was always combed perfectly and then “glued down” with hairspray so not a single hair would move out of place.

His perfect cowboy hat. His Wrangler shirts with the pearl snaps. His boots and jeans with a big western belt buckle, even when he worked in the office. He would wear a nice shirt to work, but from the waist down, you knew he was half cowboy.

He was finally able to retire in 2015 and slow down a bit. For the first time in his life, he didn't have to wake up early and head off to work. He enjoyed being able to sleep in and just lay in bed and relax, though he never quit working. He was always out clearing limbs, mowing the lawn, or sweeping the carport. He just didn't know how to stop.

For the last two and a half years of his life, his daughter and grandkids lived on the same property with him. He said it was the best years of his life. He was able to spend quality time with them and see them every single day. He enjoyed the many meals together and all the sleepovers the grandbabies would have at his house.

He always said he was "tougher than 6 cowboys" and "too mean to die" and he proved that by fighting so hard to stay here with his family with all his might. He was so strong that even death couldn't kill him. He was preceded in death by his parents.

Left to treasure his memory are his loving wife of almost 45 years, Teresa Mae (Thurman) Kutch; his daughter, Renea (Kutch) Amos, and son-in-law, Mike, and three grandchildren; Dylan Wyatt Kutch, Kaitlyn Michelle Kutch, and Jason Tyler Amos, all of Caldwell, Texas; a close cousin, Johnny Cook of Lake Eufaula, Oklahoma; and two very special life-long friends of more than 60 years; Jay Walrath of Livingston, Texas, and Harris "Diddle" Cloninger of Houston, Texas. He is also survived by his brother, Karl Kutch of Mesquite, Texas; and daughter, Lana (Kutch) Barker of Caldwell, Texas.

His final wishes were this: “Don’t cry for me. Just put me in the back of the Mustang, have ‘Born to be Wild’ blasting on the radio, and haul ass!”

He is resting at his home on the ranch, where he always wanted to be.