



## Paul Randall Hoover

June 9, 1950 - May 23, 2017

Major Paul Randal Hoover

“Go the Extra Mile...It’s Never Crowded”

Paul Randall Hoover, 66, beloved husband, father, grandfather, coach and runner died tragically on Tuesday, May 23, 2017 in Crawfordville, FL while on an evening run. Those that knew Paul recognized that one of his passions in life was running and coaching others in the sport he loved. Paul leaves behind a family that turned to him for wisdom, guidance, and love. They include his wife, Myrna Hoover, sister, Muriel Thornton (Larry), sister-in-law, Marcia Pugh, children Tiffany Hoover, Justin and Tyler Unger, Avery and Robin Tubbs and his grandchildren Cassidy, Kensley, and Ryleigh Hoover and Kaleb Tubbs. Paul was born on June 9, 1950 to Randall Ivan and Florence (Mohre) Hoover in Denver, Colorado. Raised in Upper Sandusky, Ohio by his mother and step-father Robert Mohre he grew up showing quarter horses, hunting, working the family farm, and dreaming of being a game warden. Paul attended Ohio State University graduating with a degree in Wildlife Management in 1972. When applying for his first job, one professor’s reference expressed the attributes Paul would come to be known and loved for throughout his 30-year career with what was then the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission. He stated, “Paul has fine ability in oral and written communication, high personal standards and morals; ability to work cooperatively with others; high likelihood of acceptance by peers and people of the community; individual initiative and the ability to organize and develop a work plan.” Hired as a Game Manager in

Dixie County on March 5, 1973, Paul's dream to become a game warden was fulfilled when he transferred to the Division of Law Enforcement in 1974. In 1977, Paul Hoover was recognized as Florida's Wildlife Officer of the Year. It was the beginning of a career that has personified excellence, commitment to duty, character, productivity, good judgment, and most of all, leadership. In 1979, he promoted to Leon County, where he served with distinction as Sergeant and Lieutenant over a four-county area. In 1990, he promoted to Captain as the first Bureau Staff Officer in the statewide headquarters. In 1994, he again promoted to Bureau Chief of Operations and Investigations over the entire state, overseeing the administration of five regional law enforcement entities. During this time, he attended and graduated from the 1997 FBI National Academy. In 1999, several agencies merged to create the current Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and Paul became Chief of West Field Operations laying the foundation of the Division of Law Enforcement in this new agency. Paul's commitment to the protection of fish and wildlife resources reflects sustained excellence and achievement, and his example will continue to be a benchmark for law enforcement professionals dedicated to the protection of these resources. Paul served the agency he loved for 31 years retiring on August 31, 2004. The following year, Paul was awarded the Guy Bradley Award for Outstanding Leadership and Professional Excellence. His deep caring about the conservation of our country's natural resources and the environment may have begun on a farm in Ohio but it continued until the day he died. Paul's leadership was not only evident at work, but it could also be found in the community, in schools, and in international athletic circles.

In 1979, Paul began his other passion, running. Paul's running career spanned almost four decades and formed the foundation from which he approached life...always going the extra mile. Although you never heard Paul talk about his running records, he successfully represented the agency in the Florida Law Enforcement Games and the International Law Enforcement Games. His love of running and commitment to fitness set a standard that

may never be equaled. Competing in the Florida Law Enforcement Games twenty-two times beginning in 1980, he won gold in the half marathon twenty of those years. Paul still holds the all-time record in every age-class from age 35 to 54 in that event. Paul ran the half marathon three times at the international event, winning all three. In 1999, he competed in the International Track and Field, winning gold in the 4X4 relay, the 400, the 800, and the mile. Paul received the Gulf Winds Track Club Runner of the Year in 1994, the Cleveland-Caldwell Advancement of the Sport Award in 2014 and served on the Gulf Winds Board of Directors.

Paul's love of running made it impossible for him not to share those talents with others. So, in 2006, he began coaching the Wakulla High School Cross Country and Track teams. The cross-country team began with 15 runners, growing to 40 athletes a year. He shared his love for running with anyone who wanted to lace up a pair of shoes, frequently providing those shoes himself. Paul's dedication, mentorship, and guidance not only attracted these young adults to the teams, but it propelled them to numerous Regional qualifying teams, District Champion and Runner-up teams, and individual Regional and State qualifiers. In 2008, the team brought home its first Cross Country award. In 2011 the girls won their first district title, had their first girls' state qualifier and state team participation. In 2012, the boys first qualified for state. The track team was awarded its first team award in 2015, followed by hosting the first track and field home meet the following year. This past year, the boys' team was District Champion for the fifth consecutive year and qualified for the state meet for the fourth consecutive year. The boys' team placed 11th at the state meet, its best placing ever. The girls have been either District Champions, Runner-ups, or qualified for the Regional Meet each of the last six years. Two girls advanced past the Regional Meet in 2016 and qualified for the State Meet. One girl was invited to participate in the FACA All Star Senior Meet, a prestigious post-season meet for 32 of the top seniors from around the state. Not only did the teams benefit from Paul's coaching, but several

athletes went on to sign with post-secondary institutions on the strength of their cross country and track and field performances.

Paul's love and caring for these kids was the reason for this success. Paul believed "kids didn't care how much you knew, until they knew how much you cared". Paul Hoover cared, and his kids knew it. Through the years, he touched the lives of the hundreds of kids he mentored, coached, encouraged and loved. If this were not enough, in June of 2013, Paul Hoover spearheaded the inaugural WHS Freedom Run, with help from parents and his athletes. This annual event continues to help support the WHS Cross Country and Track programs.

In addition to athletic achievement, Coach Hoover emphasized the importance of citizenship and scholastic achievement. Each year, among other volunteer activities, he would organize a group of "his kids" to provide a water station at the Tallahassee Turkey Trot, Tallahassee's largest annual running activity. At each end of the season banquet or cookout, he never failed to recognize those students who had excelled academically. As one parent has stated, "He was prouder of his kids on graduation day, than he was on race day". Surely, he was an incredible man. Paul will be warmly remembered as a pillar of this community and will be missed by everyone that crossed paths with him, on and off the track. Paul R. Hoover will continue to be a role model and a guiding light for his friends and family in the years to come.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held Saturday, May 27, 2017, 11:00 am at Wakulla High School Gymnasium.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Wakulla High School Cross Country Track Booster Club, 3237 Coastal Highway, Crawfordville, FL 32327/850-926-7125 or to the gofundme account that has been set up to benefit the young men and women participating in Wakulla High School's Cross Country and Track teams at <https://www.gofundme.com/paul-hoovers-go-the-extra-mile>

The arrangements are under the care of Skip Young with Family Funeral Home & Cremation Services 850-926-5919 Family fhc.com



# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

MAY 27. 11:00 AM (ET)

Wakulla High School Gymnasium  
3237 Coastal Highway  
Crawfordville, FL 32327

# Tribute Wall



“ *Young Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Paul Randall Hoover* ”



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**Family Funeral Home and Cremation Services** - May 25, 2017 at 01:33 PM

MP

“ *Myrna, Tiffany & Family:*

*We are very sorry for the loss of Randy. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.*

*Also, Randy was a USHS school mate two years behind me and in my wife's 1968 class.*

*We always enjoyed Randy & you stopping by the Wyandot County Prosecutor's Office to visit Muriel & us. Muriel worked 27 years with us in the office, until she retired in 2002.*

*As you remember, Chuck & I ran in several 5k runs with Randy in the Upper area. Randy was a very good runner & I was not surprised that he had so many awards & coached others.*

*Our other legal secretary, Renae, was also so sad to learn of Randy's passing.*

*Rest In Peace, Randy.*

*Mike & Sheryl Pfeifer*

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**Mike & Sheryl Pfeifer** - May 30, 2017 at 03:26 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Paul Randall Hoover.*



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May 27, 2017 at 01:34 PM

KS

“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



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**Ken and Shellie** - May 27, 2017 at 07:50 AM

KS

“ *What a great man! Such a kind heart! There are so many memories. He has taught me so many things. The one I love the most is he taught me how to change the spark plugs in my car when I was 17. He built a fence in my backyard for my dog. We were in a car accident together that totaled his car, but we both walked away without a scratch. Thank you for everything you've done, touching my heart and being in my life. I guess God needs his kind heart in heaven now. He will be missed greatly!*



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**Ken and Shellie** - May 27, 2017 at 07:48 AM

RT

“ *Robin Tubbs purchased the Pretty Please for the family of Paul Randall Hoover.*



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**Robin Tubbs** - May 26, 2017 at 12:53 PM

AC

“ I did not know Mr.Hoover personally, I never meet the guy, but my Husband and Son did. My Son has Autism,and this was his first year competing in the Walulla Special Olympics. My son loves to run so he was going to compete in the 50 and 100 yard race. My husband took him to the high school track in the evenings to practice. This is where they meet Mr. Hoover, he gave my husband and son lots of tips to get ready. My son came home telling me all about this man "The Awesome Coach". He said Mom ,I'm gonna be able to do this because Mr. Paul told me so! He put so much confidence in my son and really touched his heart. My son Ethan went to the Olympics and won both races. So I wanted to share my Son's story about " The Awesome Coach Mr. Paul,may you Rest In Peace. Thank you for Believing in my son and taking your time to encourage him! Amy Cutchin

Amy Cutchin - May 25, 2017 at 02:41 PM

JE

“ Paul, was such a nice man. I will miss seeing him at the courthouse and in the County Judge's courtroom.

Jessica - May 25, 2017 at 02:40 PM

MB

“ Marilyn Barger lit a candle in memory of Paul Randall Hoover



Marilyn Barger - May 25, 2017 at 01:44 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Paul Randall Hoover.*



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May 25, 2017 at 01:33 PM



“ *With deepest sympathies to all who knew and loved Paul...putting trust in our loving God to envelope you with His presence today and for the days ahead...with love and prayers....becky*

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**Becky** - May 25, 2017 at 12:59 PM



“ *I will never forget coach Hoover. He was an amazing soul that was able to bring out the best in everyone around him. As a track coach, he motivated everyone to do their best. You can tell from everyone that has been touched by him that he didn't play favorites. He treated everyone with respect and love and that's what made him such a special person. Ill never forget all of the guidance and lessons learned from him over the years in track and I feel sorry for the future students that won't have the same amazing mentor that I had. It is a shame such an amazing person was lost in such a tragic way.*

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**Frankie Humphries** - May 25, 2017 at 12:37 PM

RF

“ I was fortunate enough to have a relationship with the Hoover Family through church. I will miss Paul's quiet spirit with that enduring, never ending smile. To Myrna and family - there is nothing I can say to you to ease your terrible pain, but do know that Paul is the type of man and person we all aspire to become. He will be missed in body, but not in spirit. May God bless you and hold you tight.

*Rick Frazier*

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**Rick Frazier** - May 25, 2017 at 11:39 AM



“ So sad to hear of Paul's passing. Lots of memories from years of running and racing .Prays for his family .

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**Scott Hoxie** - May 25, 2017 at 11:25 AM

CT

“ As one of the kindest and most positive people I have ever known, Paul represents all that is admirable, helpful, kind, and powerful in us. I am proud to have had the opportunity to know him over the past 25+ years. There was always a smile, always a kind word, and always an example of how to get the most out of yourself while never failing to extend a helping hand to others. He was a wonderful runner, but that was only a small piece of the man we know. We miss Paul already.

*Chris and Pat Teaf*

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**Chris and Pat Teaf** - May 25, 2017 at 11:19 AM

TA

“ *Tara Alford lit a candle in memory of Paul  
Randall Hoover*



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**Tara Alford** - May 25, 2017 at 10:45 AM

 Connor  
Whitfield

“ Anyone who knew Coach Hoover, knew what a generous and kind person he was. I had the pleasure and privilege of having him as my cross country coach for three years. In those three years I got to see a many acts of kindness come from Coach Hoover, but there is one in particular I will never forget. One day I went to school wearing my Georgia boots and forgot to bring my running shoes for practice after school that day. I was 15 at the time so there was no way for me to drive home and get my trainers before practice started. So I waited around the softball field bathroom with all my other team mates until Coach showed up in his little silver Honda CRV with the hitch rack full of water on the back. As I was walking up to his car to tell him that I couldn't run at practice that day because I forgot my shoes, he was in the middle of lacing up his Nike's for practice. After I explained to coach my situation, he asked me "what size shoes do you wear"? I told him I wore a 10.5 or 11 and he said "well how about you wear these, and just give them back after practice". Of course I would have just rather not ran 6 miles on asphalt in the 95 degree summer heat, but I didn't have a good reason to say no to his kind gesture. I also knew Coach wasnt about to give me an excuse to skip practice considering we ALWAYS had practice come rain, sunshine, or in my case barefooted. Now I'm sure everyone has heard the saying "he would give you the shirt off his back" but I watched this man literally give me the shoes off his feet just so I could run that day. Now im not sure if Coach gave me those shoes because they were nikes and he much preferred the Asics in the back of his car, but that act of kindness is forever stored in my memory and is how I will always describe what a kind and generous person Coach Hoover was. You have touched and inspired so many lives, and are the embodiment of what it means to be a good man Coach. I will never forget all the valuable lessons you have taught me both on and off the course. I both love and thank you Coach Hoover, I look forward you seeing you at the finish line when I run my last mile.

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Connor Whitfield - May 24, 2017 at 10:53 PM

“ There are so many memories I have of coach and our time together. Two that more recent that I'd like to share shows how much he truly cared for his runners. Last year I ran my first Ultra distance race at the Wakulla Springs State park. Now, I've never had completed any race above a 10K. When I told coach he said "Son, most people work their way UP to that distance, not work their way down." He encouraged me anyway and gave me a workout schedule to prepare. When the race day came I began the race at a solid 7 flat pace and put myself in second place! I learned why everyone else started out so slow. By time I reached the 4th 10K loop I was barely moving, probably 10min pace or slower for a majority of that loop. Then, at one of the checkpoints I was told that Coach Hoover was out on the course looking for me. That's all I needed to hear to feel recharged and ready to go! I left the checkpoint with a smile anticipating meeting up with coach. Once I found him I was ecstatic! He and I ran the remainder of the 50K Ultra and he told me that besides my first loop, my last was the fastest 10 loop that I completed. When I thought I was spent in the 4th, coach showed me that I had some much more left and was able to outperform myself even on tired legs. It meant the world to me to have coach by my side! I got to talking a mile a minute and he had to stop me to remind me that we had a race to finish. I finish that 50K in 7th place clocking the last mile at 7:13 my fastest mile the whole race.

The next story took place about two months later at the Tallahassee Marathon. Coach didn't make a appearance, but seeing Madi Harris at the FSU water station got me going again! The great thing about that day was the moment I got home, I received a phone call from Coach. The first thing he said was "so 49th place eh, not too shabby!" I laughed and asked how he knew my time and place? He said "Travis, I've been sitting at my computer for the last hour refreshing the results page. Just waiting for your name to pop up." He said he was checking email as well, but just the fact that he waited to see my name put a huge smile on my face! He cared for me even after I was no longer a runner under the Wakulla High banner. That's the sort of character that Coach had that made him

*great!*


*I'll have more to share I'm sure. For now, this will do.*

*Love you Coach Hoover and Mrs. Coach!*

*Forever in my heart,  
Travis James Parks*

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**Travis Parks** - May 24, 2017 at 09:32 PM

  
Melissa-  
Mike  
Martin

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



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**Melissa-Mike Martin** - May 24, 2017 at 09:03 PM