

# Texas Personalities

## Richard Petty

During the 32 years of Petty's racing career on the NASCAR Winston Cup circuit, he has seen the sport grow from the dirt tracks of North Carolina to the brand new speedways built now fit for a millionaire's sky box at the latest dome. And from the real, drive them on the road stock cars, to the purpose built high performance models used today, Richard Petty's impact on the sport of motor racing outstrips the glory of any one of his victory lanes. He was born in Level Cross, North Carolina on June 2, 1937. His father, Lee, raced cars, and Petty often traveled with his mother and his brother, Maurice, following his father's own career.

As a young man Petty watched his father, Lee, win three Grand National (now Winston Cup) championships. Maurice went to work on engines, and in 1958 it was time for Richard to take to the track. Between winning his first race at the long gone Charlotte Speedway in 1960, and running his last race at the Atlanta Motor Speedway in 1992, Richard Petty's record that will be talked about for many generations to come.

Many agree that Petty has been, and continues to be, the guiding force turning NASCAR racing into the most popular form of motor sports in America today. Richard Petty has won the Most Popular Driver award nine times. Wearing his trademark cowboy hat and shades, Petty signs autographs for his fans everywhere he goes. As a public figure Richard Petty makes it clear that the two most important things in his life are his family and his fans. Winning races doesn't hurt, but Petty lets people know where his values are.

Petty retired from competitive driving at the end of the 1992 season, but he has not stopped the hunt for victory. Petty Enterprises won two Winston Cup teams, and a NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series race truck. Richard Petty was the 1996 Republican candidate for secretary of state in North Carolina, but lost to Democrat Elaine Marshall.

Petty's son, Kyle, followed his father into competitive racing, and now Kyle's son, Adam, races cars. Starting with Richard Petty's father, Lee, the family now has four generations ensuring the endurance their dynasty.

Courtesy of <http://www.famoustexans.com/>

