FRANKLIN LEON COATS

(Obituary)

Franklin Leon Coats passed away on February 2, 2019, at his home. Leon was born July 17, 1924, in Columbia, Missouri to James Allen Coats and Mary Roberts Coats.

At age 5, his father died, leaving his mother with 12 children. Leon was the next to the youngest. Life was hard at every turn, but all of the Coats' family had a strong sense of who they were. Yes, they were poor in money, but oh so rich in pride, honesty, determination, intelligence, and raw muscle. Where there was a will, there was a way, and they were all determined enough to find it.

Leon married Marilyn Nichols June 15, 1947. They have been devoted to each other for 71 1/2 years.

In 2001, Leon made the Columbia Tribune "Best Hickman High School Football Players for the Century" list. His coach, at Hickman, had described him as the toughest kid he had ever coached. He played center and linebacker and had never missed a down, despite having 4 teeth kicked out in a game.

Leon joined the Navy in 1943 and served for 2 years in the Naval Armed Guard. He set records in physical fitness while in training camp in Faragot, Idaho. Ironically, Leon was denied officer training because of his 4 missing teeth.

Leon was an auditor, bookkeeper, business owner, and unpaid comedian. Leon had a unique ability to inspire and motivate those around him to be the best they could be. He valued excellence in character, academics, athletics, and human relations. This is the legacy Leon has left for his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren: NEVER, NEVER, NEVER, NEVER, NEVER, NEVER GIVE UP.

Leon was preceded in death by his father, mother, 5 sisters, 6 brothers, and a son Steve Coats.

He is survived by his cherished wife, Marilyn; his brother and best friend, Russell Coats; and 2 daughters, Linda Coats and Libby Peabody (Jim). He is also survived by 5 grandsons: Jeremy Miller (Renee), Josh Miller (Amanda), Phil Peabody (Shayna), Tim Peabody (Stephanie), and Mark Peabody (Kelsi), 13 great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

QUOTES

"I was blessed with the best parents in the world, the best brothers and sisters in the world, and the best wife in the world, and the best kids in the world." F. Leon Coats

"I'm not ready for a world without Leon Coats. One of the redeeming qualities of Earth is that it occasionally produces a Leon." Tim Peabody

VERSES

"A joyful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit dries up the bones." Proverbs 17:22, CSB

"The Teacher sought to find delightful sayings and write words of truth accurately." Ecclesiastes 12:10, CSB

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:3, KJV