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Thomas J. Roberts



Posted by [Trib](#) on Jun 29th, 2015 and filed under [Obituaries](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#). Both comments and pings are currently closed.

Thomas L. Roberts, 87, of Silex, entered his heavenly home Saturday, June 27th, 2015, while at home with his family and friends gathered around in loving support.

A funeral mass will be held Friday at 11 a.m., at St. Alphonsus Catholic Church in Millwood with Fr. Charles Tichacek. Burial will be in the St. Alphonsus Cemetery with military honors provided by the V.F.W. Post #5553 and Missouri Military Honors.

Visitation will be held from 4-8 p.m., Wednesday at Millwood Knights of Columbus Hall.

He was born on March 3, 1928 to Joseph W. and Caroline A. Roberts "Bauer" on the family farm in the Millwood area. He attended local schools and went to high school at Assumption in O'Fallon.

He signed up for the Navy in the spring of 1946. During his stint in the navy he bravely served as a pitcher for the naval baseball team. He was honorably discharged after serving his country.

Soon after his discharge from the navy, he caught the eye of a minor league recruiter. He whole heartedly accepted their offer to continue chasing his first true love, baseball. At the ripe old age of 24 he traveled to Georgia and began to play for the Thomasville Tomcats. From there he transitioned to the Tifton Blue Sox, the Valdosta Browns (St. Louis farm team), and the Harlan Smokies.

After several years of playing baseball he decided it was time to return home to Millwood. Even though he was now home again, his passion for baseball wouldn't give up. He played for several hard road teams that traveled through the area. It was his style of pitching and brushing people back off his plate that created the legacy of "Smoke". If you got to close to his plate he would smoke a fastball right past your chin. His legacy didn't stop there. In 1992 he was inducted into the minor league hall of fame where his career will be recognized for eternity.

Now that he was home again he began his lifelong working career at Central Elevator. He started out as a truck driver, and saw the growing potential

at his fingertips. He later purchased the company with partners Mel and Mike to continue to grow the dream. They began to execute this plan in 1961. This path took place over the next 50 plus years. During that journey he served as general manager and President of the Board as well as handling numerous other duties.

He met his other love, Evelyn L. Wielms, who soon trumped his passion for baseball, in 1973. They spent many nights courting each other on the dance floor for the next five years. This courtship ended in the beginning of a wonderful marriage on Nov. 25, 1978. They came together with all their kids and turned their house into a home.

Janet, Tina, Sonya, Chris and Tommy all enjoyed being at home in the pool. The one that he worked so hard to keep up for not only his family but the community because he knew how much everyone loved it. It was this devotion to the people that surrounded him that made him the great man that we all know and love. He always made sure that everyone felt welcome and invited.

He is survived by his loving wife, Evelyn, their five children, Janet, Tina, Sonya, Chris, Tommy, and their spouses. He is also survived by their grandchildren, Drew, Amanda, Ashley, Grant, Kayleigh, Nicholas, Halle, Alex, Will, Kai, and Teagan. Plus a numerous amount of additional family and friends. All of who will miss the great man they know, Tom Roberts.

Memorials may be made to the donor's choice.

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81°F



Cloudy

RealFeel®: 80°F

Winds: E at 6 mph

Your Extended Forecast

Tonight

- / 65°
Patchy clouds

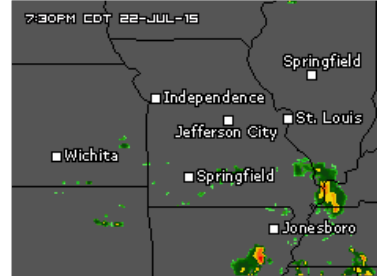
Tomorrow

83°/67°
Humid with patchy clouds

Friday

86°/73°
Partly cloudy and humid

Saturday

92°/74°
Partly cloudy and humidRadar | [Enlarge](#)[Weather Forecast](#) | [Weather Maps](#) | [Weather Radar](#)**State Farm**

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