



In Memory of
Jeriel Kent Kurtz

September 14, 1930 - November 1, 2016

Jeriel Kent Kurtz, 86, passed away peacefully on November 1, 2016 at the Missouri Veteran's Home in Mexico, MO after an eleven year battle with Alzheimer's disease. He was born on September 14, 1930 in Columbia, MO, the youngest of six children to Grace (Brady) and Earl Nicholas Kurtz.

A visitation will be held at Memorial Funeral Home, 1217 Business Loop 70 West, Columbia, MO 65202 from 5:00 to 7:00 pm on Thursday, November 3. A memorial service will be held at First Christian Church, 101 North 10th Street, Columbia, MO 65201 at 11:00 am on Friday, November 4, followed by a reception at the church. A private burial will be held prior to the memorial service.

Kent began his love of sports early on shooting marbles and playing stickball. That love evolved into football, basketball, and baseball – his favorite. He attended Hickman High School in Columbia where he played basketball and quarterbacked the Kewpie football team. After graduating from Hickman in 1948, Kent pledged Kappa Sigma Fraternity at the University of Missouri (BS Ed '53, M.Ed '58, EdD '89). He excelled as a second baseman for the Tiger baseball team, earning third team All American in 1952. Drafted by the New York Yankees, he progressed to their AAA minor league team – the Kansas City Blues. His baseball career was put

on hold while he served two years as a U.S. Air Force special services officer (captain) at Fort Snelling in Minneapolis, MN. Returning from active duty, he met his future bride, Paula Oviatt, and they were married on August 24, 1956 in Kansas City, MO. Thus began a long and productive life as a devoted husband and father. Kent's greatest joys in life were his family, friends, cheering for the Missouri Tigers and St. Louis Cardinals, and playing golf.

The majority of his thirty-five year professional career was with the Columbia Public Schools as a teacher, coach, Principal of West Junior High School, and the first District Athletic Director. In 2003, he was inducted into the Columbia Public Schools Hall of Leaders. He ended his career and retired as the Associate Director of the Missouri State High School Athletic Association (MSHSAA). Throughout his working life, Kent showed his love of sports by officiating football and basketball at the high school and college levels, including many years as a Big 8 basketball referee. He also took a leadership role in rule interpretation and referee evaluation at both levels.

As a lifelong member of First Christian Church in Columbia, Kent served as a deacon, elder, and chairman of the administrative board.

Kent is survived by his wife Paula; son Brian Kent Kurtz (Teri) of Kansas City; daughters Kim Kurtz Burzinski (Joe) of St. Louis, Kristan Lynn Kurtz of Phoenix, Arizona, and Kelly Elizabeth Kurtz of Salt Lake City, Utah; sister Ruth Portell of Mission, KS; grandchildren Christopher Brian Kurtz, Katherine Rose Kurtz, Brady Kent Kurtz, Joseph Kent Burzinski, and Grace Margaret Burzinski; cousin Bert Brady (Marty), brother in-law Jim McMillan, sister in-law Sue McMillan, sister in-law Marsha Cole, and dear nieces and nephews. Kent was preceded in death by his parents, brother Gene and sisters Kay Ogden Leonard, Grace Garrison, and Phyllis Wood.

Special thanks to friends, support groups, the staff at the Missouri Veteran's Home, Mary Reams, Lynne Hillis and Hospice Compassus for helping him and the family during the journey.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial donations be made to First Christian Church, 101 North 10th Street, Columbia, MO 65201 or the Missouri Veterans Home, One Veterans Drive, Mexico, MO 65235 or the Alzheimer's Association, 2400 Bluff Drive, Columbia, MO 65201.

Visitation

Thursday, November 3, 2016 | 05:00 PM - 07:00 PM

D.W. Newcomers Sons Inc Memorial Funeral Home
1217 BUSINESS LOOP 70 W, COLUMBIA, MO 65202 | 5734433173

Driving Directions

Memorial Service

Friday, November 4, 2016 | 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM

First Christian Church

101 N 10Th St, Columbia, MO 65201-4948

Driving Directions