



David Duke Coffey

January 28, 1922 - September 17, 2020

If you ever met Dave Coffey, chances are he shared a story with you. Now is the time to share the story of his life.

Born on January 28, 1922, to Tazzie (Loftis) and Duke David Coffey, “Junior” as he was called by friends, was raised in Bristol, Tennessee. While attending Tennessee High School, he served as Student Council President, Senior Class President, and was awarded “Best All Around Boy”. He played football, marched in the school band and graduated in 1941.

Dave was awarded a co-op scholarship to The University of Cincinnati and started his college education while co-oping in Saltville, VA. After Pearl Harbor, Dave enrolled in the V-12 Navy College Training Program, which was designed to supplement the forces of commissioned officers in the United States Navy for World War II. The Navy sent him to Purdue University, where he graduated with a degree in Chemical Engineering. After graduation, Dave was sent to Midshipmen School at Columbia University in New York City. He graduated as an Ensign in the Navy (1945), attended Diesel School in Miami, FL, and then shipped out to the Pacific on the U.S. Eisner, a Destroyer Escort. He was discharged from the U.S. Navy in 1946, as a Lieutenant, Junior Grade.

Dave moved to Woodbury, New Jersey where he met his life-long soulmate, Geraldine Tremaine Elmer. After their wedding, he accepted a job at Holston Defense Army Ammunition Plant, and they moved to Tennessee. One of his favorite stories centered around the day they got a call about a baby girl available for adoption. On first meeting the baby, there was an immediate bond, and Linda became their greatest joy.

Dave always had a heart for community and world service. As a member (and former president) of the Kingsport Rotary Club, he went on mission trips to Haiti in order to establish a vocational school. As a member of Colonial Heights Presbyterian Church, he was involved in many roles, but his favorite story was chasing a runaway black sheep through Colonial Heights during the outdoor Christmas Pageant.

In 1969, Dave was one of the founders of Sing-Out Kingsport, a group of High School students who performed songs of social justice.

Dave excelled at sports, but tennis was his favorite and he played until the age of 96. He had a famous shot dubbed by others as "Coffey's Corner"! Other interests included fishing, camping, golf, photography, traveling, and woodworking. Most of his friends have some sort of creation which he lovingly made in his workshop. One of his favorite monthly events was gathering with his Bridge Club, which later became a social club. These friends had a history of fifty-five years together.

There was always a dog in the Coffey house and Dave leaves behind his loyal partner, Maxwell House (Max) who will be lovingly cared for by his daughter, Linda.

When The Blake of Kingsport opened, Dave knew that it was time to move and left his house of 62 years to move into his "new" home. The staff and residents of The Blake have been like family to him and it was one of his best life decisions.

Dave was preceded in death by his parents, Tazzie (Loftis) and Duke David Coffey, his wife, Geraldine, sister Gladys (Neal) Smith, and nephew Rick Lewis.

Treasuring his memory are his daughter - Linda Coffey, Brother, Jack (Shirlene) Coffey, Nephews - Steve (Patti) Smith, Eric (Lori) Coffey; Nieces, Sandra (David) Booher, Jennifer (Frankie) DuBusk, and Linda Lewis. He was loved by many great nieces and nephews, and great-great nieces and nephews.

In an effort to sum up a fitting description of the person Dave was known to be, a line from one of his favorite musicals states it best, "I never met a man I didn't like" (Will Rogers Follies).

Dave had a heart for charities, and nothing would please him more than to have memorials made in his name to the Rotary Club of Kingsport Foundation, Kingsport Community Foundation, or Colonial Heights Presbyterian Church.

A Celebration of Life Service will be conducted at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, September 20, 2020, under the main entrance portico of Oak Hill Funeral Home. The Rev. Dr. Bradley K. Walker will officiate. Music will be provided by Jenny Rogers, Andy Rogers and Kim Morgan Dean. The family will receive friends immediately following the service.

A private inurnment committal service will be held at a later date at Oak Hill Memorial Park.

The family respectfully requests those attending the service to please wear a mask and practice social distancing.

For those unable to attend, the service will be streamed live on Linda Coffey's Facebook page.

To leave an online condolence for the family please visit www.oakhillfh.com

The care of David Duke Coffey and his family has been entrusted to the staff of Oak Hill Funeral & Cremation Services.

Events

SEP **Celebration of Life** 04:00PM - 04:30PM
20

Oak Hill Funeral and Cremation Services
800 Truxton Drive, Kingsport, TN, US, 37660

Comments



“ A tribute video has been added.



Oak Hill Funeral and Cremation Services - September 18, 2020 at 03:31 PM



“ Such an incredibly rich and wonderful life.... full of faith, family, friends and country. Junior was not only blessed, but he was such a blessing to everyone. Linda, I will forever remember growing up and looking forward to our visits to see your Dad, Mom and you in the home on Red Oak Lane. And I especially love seeing all the beautiful photos of you with your Dad. The love, friendship, and companionship between the two of you was so evident and undeniable. I pray that, when my time comes to meet God, my life will have been as joyful, loving, wonderful and meaningful as Junior's.

Steve Smith - September 23, 2020 at 11:13 AM



“ It will be hard to imagine Colonial Heights Presbyterian Church without Mr. Coffee. His friendly greeting and ubiquitous smile were always there. He had a phenomenal memory and is one of the few who would remember me and know my name. I never knew all the wonderful things to which he contributed his self and resources. I appreciate especially his service to our county in the U.S. Navy. My condolences go out to the family but we all know he is with the Lord and has heard: "Well done good and faithful servant...."

Sincerely,
The Rev. Dr. C. Phillip Kestner
Son of "Shorty" and Doshia

Dr. C. Phillip Kestner - October 01, 2020 at 04:21 PM



“ All of us will miss a fine gentleman and faithful Rotarian. Dave's ready welcoming smile and greeting was a highlight of joining his table at our Rotary meeting. Linda our prayers are with you. We have lost a dear Tom & Vivian Todd.

Thomas W Todd - September 21, 2020 at 09:03 AM



“ Linda, I am so sorry for your loss. Dave was a great friend. We shared a lot of good times. Playing tennis or sharing stories about the Navy. I respected and admired the things he had done.

Gene Archer - September 20, 2020 at 11:08 AM



“ Love, Matt, Christina, Landon & Baby Boy Lewis purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of David Duke Coffey.



Love, Matt, Christina, Landon & Baby Boy Lewis - September 19, 2020 at 11:56 AM



“ We have fond memories of Dave and his kindness to us at Colonial Heights Presbyterian Church. Praying for you in the days ahead! Love, Richard and June Siggins

June Siggins - September 18, 2020 at 07:27 PM



“ 126 files added to the album LifeTributes



Oak Hill Funeral and Cremation Services - September 18, 2020 at 03:21 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of David Duke Coffey.



lwlewis - September 18, 2020 at 03:09 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of David Duke Coffey.



September 18, 2020 at 12:19 PM



“ Linda Lewis and Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of David Duke Coffey.



lwlewis - September 18, 2020 at 12:01 PM



“ 12 files added to the album Lewis Family



lwlewis - September 18, 2020 at 11:57 AM



“ Such a dear friend and “back door” neighbor. Just a few years ago my husband, Keith walked up to help Dave shovel snow off his driveway. They were talking and Keith said: “Dave, something terrible must have happened in the neighborhood. Those sirens are getting closer!” Pretty soon several emergency vehicles parked in front of Dave’s house and paramedics ran up the driveway screaming: “Where’s the emergency?” You see, every time Dave shoveled, he bumped his medic alert bracelet and there was no one inside to answer the phone. They all had a good laugh and the rescue squad finished shoveling his driveway. After that day, whenever there was a hint of snow Dave would grin and say to me: “Linda, do you think I ought to hit that medic alert bracelet again?”

Keith & Linda Goulder

Linda Goulder - September 18, 2020 at 11:09 AM



“ This is one of my favorite stories!!! You all were amazing neighbors!

Linda - September 18, 2020 at 12:22 PM



“ Dave and Gerry always sat behind us in church on Sunday morning. Gerry was officially in charge of fixing the back of my hair should it be out of order! We were always greeted with a warm and sincere smile, and I am a better person for having known them both. In recent years I have been lucky enough to have Dave in my Sunday School class. His stories and anecdotes never failed to brighten the morning for the class. He truly had a heart for helping and was an absolute sucker for a good cause. He was a great listener (a spiritual gift, in my opinion) and a tender hearted soul. The Remnant Class will leave his chair for him in memory of our beloved Dave.

Rosemary Sexton - September 18, 2020 at 09:45 AM



“ He always loved your smile and welcoming hugs!

Linda - September 18, 2020 at 12:23 PM



“ Dusty Newman lit a candle in memory of David Duke Coffey



Dusty Newman - September 17, 2020 at 08:14 PM



“ Dave is one in a million, rest in peace my friend. Our loss is heaven's gain!

Dusty Newman - September 17, 2020 at 08:14 PM



“ Our prayers of peace and comfort are offered to you, Linda, and the entire family.
Love you - The Cherrys (Lake Lure, NC)

Becky Pelot Cherry - September 17, 2020 at 07:03 PM



“ Staff Of Oak Hill Funeral Home lit a candle in memory of David Duke Coffey



Staff of Oak Hill Funeral Home - September 17, 2020 at 10:25 AM