



Walter F. Collins

January 9, 2012

Walter F. Collins, age 94 of Midtown, TN passed away on Monday, January 9, 2012 with his daughters at his side. He was a member of the First Baptist Church of Kingston, where he was a longtime deacon and Sunday School teacher. He was born in Winchester, TN on December 15, 1917 to Amos and Mary Collins. He grew up around the Chattanooga area and received a B.A. degree in Business Administration in 1940 from the Tennessee Technological University. During World War II he served as a lieutenant commander in the Coast Guard from 1942-1946. Shortly thereafter he joined the Tennessee Valley Authority as a Cost Accountant where he met Ethel Jones, whom he married in 1949. They were married for 52 years and had two daughters. His TVA projects included Paradise Steam Plant in Kentucky, and Watts Bar Nuclear Plant in East Tennessee. Retiring in 1978 after 37 years of service, he then earned a graduate degree in Education from Tennessee Tech University in Cookeville. Walter's jogging interest began when he and his wife, Ethel, moved to their house in Midtown Heights. He ran more than 640 races since he began in 1978 at age 60, including a 9-year string of 40+ races per year while he was aged 74 thru 83. Local runners honored him by proclaiming a spring race in Kingston, The Walter Collins 5K Road Race. He was a Past President of the Kingston Lions Club and member of Union Lodge #38. Preceded in death by loving wife Ethel Jones Collins, parents Amos and Mary Collins and brother George Collins. Walter's smile, humor, charm, generosity, and kindness will be missed by so very many. He was an inspiration to many

people of all ages.

Survivors include:

Daughter Carol Collins Fox of Naples, FL;

Daughter Sue Collins Reed and son-in-law James Reed of Coppell, TX;

Grandson Barrett Collins Reed of Coppell, TX.

Celebration of Life 11am Wednesday, January 11, 2012 at the First Baptist Church, Kingston with Dr. Sonny Works officiating. Memorials may be made to Hands of Mercy Food Pantry, P.O. Box 1168, Kingston, TN. 17763. The family will receive friends from 5:30 until 7:30pm Tuesday, January 10, 2012 at the Kyker Funeral Home in Kingston.

Tribute Wall

MS

“ I just read of Walters passing on the KTC website. A finer gentlemen could not have been found. Though he found running later in life he inspired countless around him with his spirit and joy of the sport. God speed Walter the next race is right around the corner.

Marty Sonnenfeldt - January 17, 2012 at 12:00 AM

SB

“ Carol and Sue,
Sara told me yesterday of Uncle Walter's passing. I am so sorry. I have some wonderful memories of your parents. I know this is a difficult time and I will keep you in my thoughts and prayers.

Sarah Jane Collins Bruner

Sarah Jane Bruner - January 16, 2012 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ Carol and Sue: I just herd about Walter.
My Forever Friend: Walter Collins
"Sometimes in life, you find a special friend. Someone who changes your life just by being a part of it. Someone who makes you laugh until you can't stop. Someone who makes you believe that there really is good in the world. Someone who convinces you that there really is an unlocked door just waiting for you to open it. This is forever friendship. When you're down and the world seems dark and empty, your forever friend lifts you up in spirit and makes that dark and empty world suddenly seem bright and full. Your forever friend gets you through the hard times, the sad times and the confused times. If you turn and walk away, your forever friend follows. If you lose your way, your forever friend guides you and cheers you on. Your forever friend holds your hand and tells you that everything is going to be okay. And if you find such a friend, you feel happy and complete because you need not worry. You have a forever friend, and forever has no end."

Jerry Monroe - January 16, 2012 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ In Walter's case, RIP should stand for "run in peace". :-) Godspeed my friend, you will be missed.

Joe and Jill Bedford - January 14, 2012 at 12:00 AM

BT

“ Walter was a wonderful Christian man and always greeted me and my family with a big smile when we saw him at road races. I ran the race that was established in his honor many times and he gave all of the female award winners a big hug when presenting the trophies! He will be missed!

Becky Tener - January 13, 2012 at 12:00 AM

FW

“ *Walter will forever be remembered to me the way he would accept an age group award at a race and then turn around and hold up his arms in a victory pose. He kept everyone in stitches. He also looked great in his Uncle Sam suit. My wife and I came to his 90th Birthday party in Kingston a few years ago. We enjoyed it very much. Walt was a great person to be around. We have all missed him the last couple of years and know you will certainly miss him now.*

Felon Wilson - January 13, 2012 at 12:00 AM

CI

“ *Dear Family,
Just learned of Mr. Collins passing. Bob Ellis and I knew him from the water office in Midtown. It was always a good day when he came by to pay his bill or just say "Hi". He was such a friend to everyone.
Bob Ellis and Cathie Ingram
(Retired from RCUD, water office in Midtown)*

Cathie Ingram - January 13, 2012 at 12:00 AM

LG

“ *Carol & Sue,
Just heard about the loss of your Father. I am so sorry but know you will take great comfort in your many wonderful memories. He was a special man--always a real gentleman and a man of strong Christian faith. I still remember how his eyes twinkled when he talked of "Miss Ethel." Please know that my thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.*

Libby (Sherrod) Gregg - January 11, 2012 at 12:00 AM

BR

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Carol and Sue,
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I'm so sorry to hear of your father's passing. It has been a blessing for mama to have your father as a neighbor and friend for many, many years. He was always so thoughtful and kind to her.

I'm sure he is celebrating in heaven with your mother now. May God comfort you and give you peace as only He can.

*Sincerely,
Becky Hunt Ridner*

Becky Ridner - January 10, 2012 at 12:00 AM

JR

“*Okay seriously -- WALTER ROCKED!!!
Few people in my lifetime have made me laugh as much as Walter.....the man had the most wonderful, dry & clever wit!
Although I know that he will be so dearly missed in our lifetime, I selfishly celebrate knowing that Carol, Sue, Jim & Barrett - really all of us - are blessed in having a new angel looking after us. Because certainly there could be no doubt - by any who had the privilege to know him - that, if anyone had the 'fast track' to Jesus & heaven.....it was Walt.
And, if a man's character is to be judged in the 'persons' of his children & grandchild - make no mistake that Walter (with his lovely wife, Ethel) was a giant -- not simply a giant among men but.... a giant among giants. Carol, Sue and Barrett - sincerely - are the best of what this world has to offer....
I knew him briefly but loved him dearly.....God bless sweet Walter. I'm guessing that Ethel has cooked up something special for their first reunion.... :-).*

Janet Reed - January 10, 2012 at 12:00 AM

LC

“ My brother and I ran in alot of races with Walter. Before the races he would always say, "Boys I hope there are a lot of learners here today". Well Walter has crossed the ultimate finish line of life and left behind alot of learners, because Walter was a master at teaching people how to live life to its fullnest and how to treat your fellow man. Sadly missed.

The Cochran Brothers

Ledford and Lonnie

Lonnie Cochran - January 10, 2012 at 12:00 AM

RF

“ My deepest sympathy to Walter's family.
Walter was a role model for all of us who knew and admired him. He was a fixture at many of the races that I ran in Knoxville several years ago and I always enjoyed his company.

I hope that I can age with as much grace and dignity as he did.

God bless.

ron fuller - January 10, 2012 at 12:00 AM