



# Harold Jerry "Coach" Peters

JUL 9, 1938 - MAY 14, 2018



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**H**arold Jerry "Coach" Peters, 79, of Memphis, TN, son of Harold and Belle Peters, passed away early Monday morning May 14th, 2018. Coach Peters married the love of his life, Ruth Ella Burrow Peters, on August 10, 1957. Jerry and Ruth were middle and high school sweethearts at Snowden School and Central High School and later attended Southwestern (Rhodes) College. Coach Peters starred in basketball and baseball at Rhodes College and later was inducted into the Rhodes College Athletic Hall of Fame. Coach Peters joined the faculty at Memphis University School (MUS) in 1960 and was an MUS icon and legend serving 52 years at the school. He was the MUS basketball varsity head coach from 1964 until his retirement in 2012, and under his leadership MUS was one of the premier basketball programs in the state. Peters crowned his career with more than 1,000 wins – more than any coach in the Shelby-Metro area and one of the top 15 in United States history at the time of his retirement. His basketball teams won numerous district, regional and sub-state championships as well as the 2007 state championship. He also served at MUS as the varsity track and varsity cross-country coach for much of his career. In the summer of 2017, MUS named the Ross Lynn Arena basketball court in honor of Coach Peters and his wife, Ruth. Alumni led this commemorative effort, which included naming the school history award in his honor and endowing a scholarship fund in his name for the sons of MUS faculty and staff. Among his many awards and recognitions, Coach Peters was inducted into the Hall of Fame for Rhodes College, the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association and the Memphis Amateur Sports Association. Coach Peters was not just a coach in the athletic arena. He also served MUS as an administrator and a classroom instructor in history and government. His influence in the classroom on students and future leaders of the Memphis community was as impactful as his athletic coaching. He had a unique often humorous way of teaching the MUS boys life lessons. He never lost his desire



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to teach and influence as many young men and women as possible. His classrooms gave him opportunities to work with both students and their families. His teaching abilities were just as decorated as his coaching. Coach Peters garnered numerous awards including the MUS Distinguished Teaching Award, the Tennessee Association of Independent Schools Award for Distinguished Teaching, the MUS Chair for Excellence in Teaching, and the MUS Awards for both Outstanding Service and Teaching. In 2013, he was honored by MUS and the school's Executive Alumni Board through his selection for the MUS Faculty Portrait Series. Coach Peters loved MUS and its students, faculty and staff. He considered it a privilege to spend each day at MUS working with young men teaching them how to do their best and to "do the right thing." He was preceded in death and will be met in heaven by his parents Harold and Belle Peters and his brothers Bobby Peters and Stanley Peters. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Ruth, and his four sons Jeff (Geri), Judd (Nicole), Jon (Jackie) and Jason (Emily). He is also survived by his grandsons Jonathan, Jerry, Jackson, Agee, Gannon, his granddaughters Ellison, Sims and Meg, and his great granddaughter Margo. The family also expresses its deep appreciation for Janice Mull who was so helpful and kind-hearted in caring for Coach Peters over the last few years. The family will have a private graveside service Saturday, May 19 followed by a public memorial service at 2:00 PM in the Memphis University School Ross Lynn Arena/gym and a visitation following for family and friends. In lieu of flowers, Memorials may be sent to the Jerry Peters Faculty Scholarship Fund at Memphis University School, 6191 Park Avenue Memphis, TN 38119, or to the Humane Society of Memphis. Arrangements have been entrusted to Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery, 5668 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38119 (901) 767-8930. "Celebrating Life... Behind the Stone Wall".



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Harold by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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