



## Robert R. Miller

October 12, 1928 - January 26, 2021

Robert R. "Coach" Miller, 92, of Mattoon, IL passed away on January 26, 2021 at Odd Fellow-Rebekah Home in Mattoon, Illinois.

Arrangements for a Celebration of Bob's life will be announced at a later date. Mitchell-Jerdan Funeral Home, 1200 Wabash Avenue, Mattoon, IL 61938 is in charge of arrangements.

Bob was born on October 12, 1928 in Wayne City, Illinois, son of the late Ross and Carrie (Legg) Miller. He is survived by his spouse Betty Miller of Mattoon, IL; three children: one daughter, Kimberly (Patrick) Keeley of Campton Hills, IL; two sons, Brad (Sydney) Miller of Huntington Beach, CA, and Brook Miller of Falls Church, VA; two grandchildren: Amanda Miller of Huntington Beach, CA, Michael (Ashley) Keeley of Hinsdale, IL; one great-grandchild, Leighton Keeley; and one sister, Jennie Tooley Kelley. He is preceded in death by his brother, James Clayton Miller, and three sisters, Alma Irwin, Alberta Miller, and Roberta Miller.

Bob attended Wayne City schools where basketball became a big part of his life. His dad made him a basketball hoop which was much smaller than regulation. After shooting on it, the regulation one looked huge contributing to his success as a shooter on good teams in high school. His average of nearly twenty-two points per game his senior year was rare for that time period.

Following high school graduation in 1946, Bob enlisted in the U.S. Army and served overseas in Tokyo, Japan through most of 1947. His service prior to the end of 1946 earned him the distinction of WWII Veteran. After the army, he attended McKendree College where he earned his BA degree. At McKendree, he was a key player on the basketball team. He earned a MS degree at Millikin University and furthered his studies at Eastern IL. University.

On January 15, 1950, Bob married Beverly Wilkerson and they had three children. Bob

was a devoted father. He shared much mutual love and admiration with his children, grandchildren and extended family members.

Bob spent thirty-five years in Illinois public education. He was a teacher and coach in O'Fallon, Tower Hill, Blue Mound, and Mattoon. After his time at Mattoon high school, he was Off-Campus Housing Director at Eastern IL University for nearly two years. In 1970, Bob was elected to the office of Coles County Superintendent of Schools. He became regional superintendent after Coles County consolidated with five other counties. In all, Bob served nearly four terms. Also, he owned and operated an independent insurance agency while in Blue Mound. In 1981, he was inducted into the IHSA Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame.

On September 29, 1990 Bob married Betty Ronchetti and acquired seven adult stepchildren. Adding to his three children it was a large but fun family. Bob and Betty were both in their 60's and retired. They spent six months in Florida and six months in Mattoon. They traveled extensively in Europe, South America and Asia. Bob commented that he would have taught history better had he been able to travel before teaching. Bob and Betty had a wonderful life together traveling, dancing every Friday night in Florida, golfing, going to football games at EIU and U of I. In 2017, they moved permanently back to Illinois.

Bob was a member of the First Presbyterian Church in Mattoon, Mattoon Rotary, Mattoon Golf and Country Club, Winter Haven Country Club and the Winter Haven American Legion.

Bob never knew a stranger. He spoke to everyone and always had a smile on his face. He was very charitable to many organizations.

This would not be complete without mentioning what a great Chicago Cubs fan he was throughout his life.

Please visit <http://www.mitchell-jerdan.com> or <http://www.facebook.com/mitchelljerdanfune> ralhome to light a virtual candle in his honor or share a memory with the family.

# Comments

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“ So sorry , Brad, for your loss. I loved watching your Dad coach each week. He had such a love for the game. Hoping you hold and recall many fond memories, Walt Egenmaier.

**Walt Egenmaier** - March 23 at 10:12 PM

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“ Ivana A Jiri Korecek lit a candle in memory of Robert R. Miller



**Ivana a Jiri Korecek** - February 20 at 08:47 AM



“ Pro vzpominku na laskaveho a mileho cloveka, poznali jsme Boba v Praze, v roce 2001 ... na svatbe nasi dcery s jeho nevlastnim synem Frankem. Bylo to prijemne setkani, skoda, ze jedine a posledni ...

**Ivana & Jiri Korecek** - February 20 at 08:52 AM



“ I had the privilege of working for 'Mr. Miller' in the Regional Schools office; he was responsible for creating expanded teaching and learning opportunities for every child who walked through the schoolhouse doors under his administration. Bob was respected, trusted, and appreciated by public officials, teachers, administrators, board members and voters. My condolences to Brad and and all of your family. It was a rare and valued treasure for me to have worked for such a very good man.

Mark Myers

**Mark Myers** - March 22 at 08:54 PM

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“ Mr. Miller was the basketball coach that took MHS to Sweet 16 in 1969. I was one of the managers on the team. We occasionally took a trip to an out-of-town game to scout a future opponent. We would talk strategy on the way home. Great memories of my senior year.

Our 50th reunion was in September 2019. Living in Baton Rouge, that was a long trip, but boy am I glad I went. The first night was when they honored the 1969 Sweet 16 team. Many of the players attended and to my surprise, so did Mr. Miller. And he remembered me after all this time. Like the obit says "he always had a smile". I guess this is what getting old is like. All your friends start passing away. I'm sad knowing that one more has gone. But so glad I had a chance to see him last year.

Gehl Davis

Gehl Davis - January 30 at 07:10 PM



“ Hi Gehl, Thank you for your kind words on Dad. We really appreciate hearing from you. It was nice to see you at the banquet last year. Great memories of the exciting 1969 team. You played an important role. Take care, Brad

**Brad Miller** - January 30 at 10:54 PM

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“ I was a young public school administrator in Paris when I met Bob Miller. He assisted me at that point in time and when we worked together several years later. Mr. Miller established a level of service for the Regional Office of Education which was admired throughout the State of Illinois. His leadership, service to others, and commitment to education set a standard for those who followed him. It was an honor to know and to work with him. John McNary

John McNary - January 29 at 02:38 PM



“ John, thank you so much for your kind words.

**Kim Keeley** - January 31 at 01:31 AM



“ Hi John, We really appreciate your praise of Dad's accomplishments in that office. When I was living at home as a youth, I was close to his accomplishments in coaching. Then there was his first election and that experience seemed like a ball game. Great hearing this from someone who was in the office and familiar with the challenges of it. Thank you, Brad

**Brad Miller** - January 31 at 05:40 PM

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“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Robert R. Miller.



January 29 at 10:48 AM

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“ Bob was a wonderful person who made history come to life. I enjoyed and benefited from his teachings. May his family be comforted by lovely memories. He motivated many of us to explore the world and different cultures. His insightful information whet my curiosity to Explore this world.

Sincerely Becky ( Gammill) craig former student

**rebecca craig** - January 29 at 08:11 AM



“ Becky, thank you so much for your kind words.

**Kim Keeley** - January 31 at 01:30 AM

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“ I was so fortunate to share in Bob’s life once he moved to Copper Creek where my father-in-law, Herman Janssen resides. I spent many a day listening to Bon share the stories of his life! So many meal times we would stay in the dining room talking about life, school (I was a teacher), politics, and just what ever was happening at the time. Bob was tickled that he worked at the regional office and gave me my teaching scholarship way back in 1977! Who knew that we would meet personally after so many years.

Bob enjoyed when I would bring my students in to do an activity or have lunch with the residents. He also enjoyed when our grandchildren came to visit. I have missed him so much through Covid not allowing us to visit. He became part of our “family”! We lost a good one! Thank you for sharing him with us in the short few years we knew him!

Kim & Steve Janssen

**Kim Janssen** - January 28 at 11:58 PM



“ Hi Kim, What a nice note on your interaction with Dad! You described the ways of the man we dearly loved. We are pleased that he was able to touch your life in such a positive way. Best wishes, Brad, Kim, and Brook Miller.

**Brad Miller** - January 30 at 11:43 PM

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“ I worked with Bob after he retired from the Regional Office of Education and filled in as the director of the Educational Service Center. He was such a kind wonderful man who seemed to be able to talk to anyone. I feel so fortunate to have known him. Sympathy and prayers to all the family

**Cheryl Johns** - January 28 at 06:06 PM



“ Hi Cheryl,  
We appreciate your kind message on Dad. I did not know that he was in that role after retirement. Nice to hear what a positive impression he made while there. Best wishes, Brad and (Kim and Brook) Miller

**Brad Miller** - January 31 at 12:02 AM

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“ Kim, I'm sad to read that your father passed away. Bob was a real gem, so many great memories of overnight stays at your house and Bob always playing chauffeur for us :) He was a wonderful, kind man, and many people will hold fond memories of him in our hearts. I'm glad I happened to see you and Bob at the Alamo a year or so ago and I will remember that fondly.

Sincerely,  
Brenda Starwalt

**Brenda Starwalt** - January 28 at 04:59 PM



“ Brenda, thank you for your kind words. I remember Dad referred to you and Pam Sanders as “The Edgar Avenue Twins”. Good memories. Kim

**Kim Keeley** - January 31 at 01:07 AM

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“ Sorry for your loss Betty and Kim, enjoyed playing bridge against him and also his book.

**Mark Daily** - January 28 at 04:18 PM



“ Thank you Mark. Dad thought very highly of you.

**Kim Keeley** - January 31 at 01:09 AM

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“ Sorry for your loss Kim. I know from experience you will always miss him.

**James Phillip (Phil) Leming** - January 28 at 02:47 PM



“ Brad Brook and Betty stopped by in mattoon to say hi to the miller's and Kim Hopkins no answer great people did a lot of work and visiting with Bob raised in Mahomet I'll Bob and I often talk about Kenny knell ag teacher at Mahomet they were good friends and golfed together many times very sorry for your loss I'll think about them a lot take care Jeff and marlene

**Jeff Gossard** - January 30 at 11:13 AM



“ My deepest sympathy to Brad and family. It was a joy for the 1969 basketball team to get together with Coach in attendance. Many fond memories.

Jim Bailey

**Jim Bailey** - January 30 at 11:52 AM



“ Hi Jeff, Really appreciate hearing from you. Dad seemed to know people everywhere. I remember him talking about you being from Mahomet and playing basketball up there. Miss our days on the links. Say hello to Marlene for me. Take care, Brad

**Brad Miller** - January 30 at 11:10 PM



“ Hi Jim, We appreciate your kind message on Dad. There certainly were fond memories from 1969. One of them was that your terrific play at Olney played a big part in us getting to the Sweet 16. Nice seeing you in 2019. I just wish we could have visited longer. Best wishes, Brad

**Brad Miller** - January 30 at 11:22 PM



“ Hi Phil, Thank you for your kind message to Kim on Dad. I believe Dave would be your older brother and your dad, Jim? You lived on Lafayette and 6th? I'll share with Kim. Best wishes. Brad

**Brad Miller** - January 30 at 11:33 PM



“ Thank you Phil for your kind message.

**Kim Keeley** - January 31 at 01:11 AM



“ It was an honor to know Bob. From the beginning of my tenure at the Regional Office of Education #11 he was extremely supportive. He would call a few times each year, usually around the same time, and deliver some words of encouragement to anyone he spoke with. I enjoyed visiting with him in person a few times each year, too. He was sharp, quick-witted, and knew what it meant to be a true public servant. He even did a little campaigning for me at Copper Creek back in 2018. I had the good fortune of attending his 90th birthday party where his friends and family members shared stories, many of which centered around his educational career and his basketball coaching legacy. A great life, a great man - I am going to miss my buddy, Bob. - Kyle Thompson, Regional Superintendent

**Kyle Thompson** - February 02 at 05:10 PM



“ Hi Kyle, Thank you for your kind note on Dad. We really appreciate your friendship with him. I remember meeting you at his 90th birthday party. Really nice that you could attend. Best wishes. Brad and (Kim and Brook)

**Brad Miller** - February 04 at 01:39 AM



“ Kim, Last night I found out about your father's passing and wanted to let you know that you and your family have my deepest sympathy. Bob was highly respected and admired by many people and had a natural way of letting people know you were in front of a kind man. These qualities are hard to find and I know he deeply loved you, Brad and Brook. Bob taught me the definition of intensity before I had the privilege of knowing him as I would go as an early teenager to watch the high school team play and would wonder to myself why is Coach Miller smiling in a crouched position in front of the bench during what seemed to be the most competitive part of the game but quickly figured out that was his "game face" and that was his drive to succeed and win. It was an honor to have known him and I have many fond memories. The fact that he was a "Cub Fan" is icing on the cake. Love to all, Dennis Seaman

**Dennis Seaman** - February 06 at 04:50 PM