



# Ralph McClain

**Alton | Friday, September 11 2015**

Ralph Franklin McClain, 92, took his final breath on September 11, 2015, and went to be with the Lord. What a glorious day for him!

Ralph was born on January 29, 1923, in Mayfield, Ky., to Roberta and Noble McClain. Ralph married Mary Lou Davis on February 7, 1943; and they had been happily married for 72 years. She survives.

Ralph graduated from Mayfield High School where starting in the 8th grade, he played on the varsity football team. Ralph, a Marine, stationed in the Philippines, proudly served his country during World War II. Years later, he took the Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. He said it was one of the best days of his life. He then graduated from Murray State University where he was a varsity fullback/punter all four years. On January 1, 1949, Ralph played in the Tangerine Bowl (now the Citrus Bowl) for the Murray State Racers against Sul Ross State. The game ended in a tie, 21-21. On the Sul Ross State's team was "Hoss" Dan Blocker from *Bonanza*.

Ralph taught at Roosevelt Jr. High, West Jr. High, and then Alton High School. Ralph was a teacher and an assistant basketball coach during the spring of 1955 when the Alton Redbirds went to the state tournament. He was also the head football coach during two of the seasons Alton beat East St. Louis back-to-back. Ralph became an assistant principal at Alton High School. Upon his retirement in 1988, he said what he would miss most were "the kids." He loved working with students and players.

Ralph was a devoted Christian, a faithful husband, a great dad, a loving grand "PaPa," and an adoring great-grand "PaPa." Ralph was a humble man who never thought he was better than anyone else. He was a man of few words who mainly led by example. His family never even heard him say one bad thing about anybody. And though his family

would try to get him to (only to make them feel better about themselves) he *never ever* did. Many of his former students and players have told the family how Ralph influenced their lives. His family is humbly grateful he has touched so many.

Besides his wife Mary Lou, Ralph leaves his children: Pam (Jim) Youngblood, Tanya (Greg) Collins, Bart (Louetta) McClain, and daughter-in-law Sally McClain. He is survived by nine grandchildren: Mary Ann (Mike) Vahl, Chris (Kelly) Youngblood, Sarah (Rich) Sitz, Hunter McClain, McClain Thompson, Samuel (Liza) Thompson, Hadley Thompson, Morgan (Cameron) Chappell, and Anna McClain. Ralph also leaves 10 great-grandchildren and one great-grandchild to be born in October. They are Marnie, Carson, and Lucy Vahl; Will and Joey Youngblood; Andrew, Emma, and Nora Sitz; and Jackson and Ellason Chappell. He is also survived by his brother Carson McClain.

Ralph was preceded in death by his parents Roberta and Noble McClain and two sons, Ralph Franklin McClain II and Jed Franklin McClain. He was also preceded in death by one brother Joe McClain and a grandson Andrew Thompson.

Per Ralph's wishes, the funeral will be private. Reverend André Dobson, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, where Ralph was a member and for many years a deacon, will officiate.

Memorials may be made to Calvary Baptist Church, Gideons International, or Land of Lincoln Honor Flight.

The McClain family wishes to thank Calvary Baptist Church, Dr. Barry Mossman, the staff at Eunice Smith Nursing Home, and Hospice. Additional information and online guest book may be found at [www.gentfuneralhome.com](http://www.gentfuneralhome.com)