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In Memory of Joel Montgomery

FEBRUARY 04TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

In Memory of Joel Montgomery

Joel A. Montgomery was born on March 25, 1920 in Biggers, Arkansas. Raised in a humble and loving home, Joel developed his entrepreneurial spirit at a young age selling vegetables grown by his family. His beginnings may have been meager, but it was the beginning of a successful career.

He passed on Friday, February 3, 2017.

Later in his life, and following his service in the U.S. Army, Joel moved to Saint Louis and entered Washington University law school. Also during this time, he joined the Dolan Real Estate Company. This is where Joel says he "found his life's work" and came to realize that he didn't want to practice law, but that he wanted to be a "real estate man."

In 1950, Joel bought land in Tennessee and moved his family to Memphis. Joel Montgomery built and developed over 6,000 homes, apartments, and condominiums in Missouri, Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana, including the first-ever condominium project in Memphis, Tennessee. He was well on his way to becoming a successful real estate developer, including land holdings in several states and one foreign country.

In 1957, Tennessee-based Union Planters sought a new, stronger stockholder to purchase Sikeston's Planters Bank. Joel Montgomery met the challenge. After his purchase of Planters Bank, he moved his young family to Sikeston, converted the charter to a national banking charter, and renamed his bank the First National Bank.

In 2004, the bank's name was changed to what it is today, Montgomery Bank, to honor the founder, Joel A. Montgomery, Sr.

During his illustrious career, he has been named Sikeston's "Man of the Year" and was honored with an extraordinary distinction being listed as one of former President George H.W Bush's "1,000 Points of Light." For all of his financial success, however, Joel Montgomery is especially proud of the role he played in establishing both the Sikeston Rescue Mission and the Bootheel Food Bank. Both are non-profit enterprises with a mission focus to help the needy of Southeast Missouri. In addition, he was honored to be member of the Masonic Order. He was a member of the Scottish and York Rites, and a Thirty Second and Thirty Third Degree Mason.

Joel Montgomery was preceded in death by his wife, Mary Lou Blue Montgomery.

Surviving are his children Richard H. Montgomery, III (Christy Seabaugh), Elizabeth Montgomery Wilson (Troy) and Joel A. Montgomery, Jr. (Maggie Moore). Other survivors include: Richard Henley Montgomery IV, William Joel Montgomery, Julianna Christine Ford, Troy Lee Wilson, Jr., Samuel Montgomery Wilson, Jordan Elizabeth Montgomery, Michael Reed Montgomery, Joel Andrew Montgomery and David Moore Montgomery. In addition, he had five great grandchildren. Joel Montgomery is also survived by his loving friend and companion, Carol Gilmore. In the final years of his life, Joel Montgomery was cared for with great love by Jessie Tate Shannon and Orlando Maurice Perkins.

Visitation will be held on Monday February 6, 2017 from 10:00 am until 1:00 pm.

The funeral service will follow at 2:00 pm, at First United Methodist Church in Sikeston, MO., Rev. Tom Bass, former minister at Hunter Memorial First Presbyterian Church in Sikeston and Pastor, Jennifer Moxley, of First United Methodist Church in Sikeston, officiating.

Burial will follow at the Garden of Memories Cemetery in Sikeston Mo.

Arrangements under the direction of Nunnelee Funeral Chapel, Sikeston, MO.

Pallbearers include: R. Henley Montgomery, William J. Montgomery. Troy Lee Wilson, Samuel M. Wilson, M. Reed Montgomery, J. Andrew Montgomery and Jessie Tate Shannon.

In lieu of flowers, contributions to Hunter Memorial First Presbyterian Church or the Bootheel Food Bank are requested.

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