



Mr. Cecil Duane Coghill

September 6, 1924 - June 1, 2018

Cecil Duane Coghill, age 93, of LaGrange, IL (formerly of Oak Park) proud WWII and Korean War Veteran; recipient of two Bronze Stars and Combat Infantry Badge; member of Merrill's Marauders. Beloved husband of Leona May (nee Beatman); loving father to Bill (Anne) and Alisa Coghill (Dan Bogojevich); cherished Granddad of Stephanie and Nick; dear cousin to many. Cecil was easy-going and a sweet spirit. He was an enthusiastic storyteller and enjoyed country drives for lunch with his wife, to whom he showed both care and devotion. Among these characteristics, he was also an avid fan of Basketball, especially the Chicago Bulls. He was also a lifelong fan of the Chicago Bears. He was a proud patriot, and will be missed by many. Funeral service Saturday, 11:30 a.m. at Muzyka & Son Funeral Home, 5776 W. Lawrence Ave., Chicago. Visitation Friday from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Entombment Memory Gardens Cemetery. Cecil was a Lifetime Mason. Memorials to Honor Flight Chicago, <https://www.honorflightchicago.org/donate/>. For more info, please call (773) 545-3800 or visit <http://www.muzykafuneralhome.com>.

Cecil Duane was born on September 6, 1924 in Macomb, IL. He was the first baby born at the new local hospital to proud parents Sarah Olive (nee Nelson) and Lawrence Dale Coghill. He was the adored, and only grandchild, to Annie and Charles Coghill, his treasured Granddad whom he revered.

Cecil grew up in rural, central Illinois on the family farm in Colchester and enjoyed fun days of adventures and a little mischief. He was known to pull a prank or two and lucky enough to attend a one room schoolhouse while his horse and best canine friend Carlo would wait dismissal time.

Days were shared with many aunts, uncles, and lots of cousins whom he continued a lifelong relationship of good times. These memories of laughter and folly would continue to entertain for decades. He always held in high esteem the friends from his school days that enjoyed the fresh country air, the carefree romps in the creek, the silly high jinx played on each other and so much more.

In High School, despite his short stature, he tremendously enjoyed playing on the basketball team and that remained his favorite sport throughout his adulthood – especially the Chicago Bulls.

In addition, he was a talented singer with a beautiful voice. He was even asked to sing for a community event from the top of the town square tower!

A humble man, his achievements were never ones he liked to boast about. Instead, he moved quietly through his lifetime believing that you “Just do what’s right, and it will all work out.” He used that as his guide and it served him, and many others, well. A principled man who showed comfort in his own skin.

On June 10, 1943 he joined the U.S. Army and was shipped to the Pacific Theater where he was a volunteer to the 5307 Composite Brigade, which then became the distinguished unit known as Merrill’s Marauders. This unit was instrumental in the success of the China-Burma Campaign. It was at this time that he was awarded two Bronze Stars and the Combat Infantry Badge. The special bonds formed with men he served with lasted a lifetime. As do so many of his stories of these difficult, and sometimes funny, experiences – including stories of being issued winter clothing and gear – but, then being sent to the hot jungle; or walking his mule Max through the mountains from India to Burma, and meeting dignitaries like President Chiang Kai Shek who presented him with the China War Memorial Medal called the Order of the Cloud and Banner for contribution to National Security.

He was a tug at your heart tv commercial in the making, when upon his return from war to small town America, his precious dog Carlo ran down the streets of Colchester to greet him! You can just picture that reunion! His love and care of animals remained always and later in life as well, from his two pugs and alley cat to the grand-dogs (and cats) that he shared lots of tasty scraps and smooches. They say animals know the good folks, and they sure recognized him!

Happily attending university on the GI Bill, he then proceeded to the big city of Chicago for career opportunity. These days were filled with experiencing the bright lights and discovering new interests not available to him previously.

Not long after, he was introduced to the love of his life, Leona May Beatman. A perfect match from the start, and on a blind date, nonetheless. However, their story would be delayed by his return to the Army for the Korean War. Luckily, they each communicated and stayed in touch during this time.

On October 1, 1960 they were united in marriage for what would be an incredible example of City Girl meets Country Boy! They truly exemplified what a partnership should be and the respect and love shown has had no equal. Over the course of six decades together, there were exceptionally few nights spent apart. Cross words or raised voices did not exist in their world. There was never a forgotten occasion or holiday that wasn’t acknowledged and celebrated together. By this time, he had various positions in the U.S. Postal Service and eventually became a VP of Operations for a private transportation company.

Together they purchased their first home and planted their roots in Oak Park, and their family grew.

Their son, Bill, was welcomed with ecstatic joy and with the later sweet addition of baby girl Alisa, their family was complete. As a Dad, Cecil couldn't be prouder and he never missed any school activities or social events. He was an ever-present, reliable fixture in the lives of his children and they both knew they could count on him no matter what circumstance. His kids take great pride in him being included with so many of their friends lives and growing families. He was just so easy and fun to be around. Bill & Alisa always strived to live in the way he exemplified so as never to disappoint him. He was so proud of each of them. Once they married, he also embraced his kids' spouses, Anne and Dan, with open arms and an open heart. This close relationship between a tremendous Dad and his kids will always remain, with gratitude.

The only thing that made him smile even more was the arrival of his darling granddaughter Stephanie. He was overjoyed and embraced the title of Granddad with sheer gusto! Their relationship has been a special one filled with playdates in the park, watching many trains go by, fireworks, soccer games, pride of her achievements and chocolate malts!

No one was sure how such an active guy would deal with Retirement, but we should never have worried - he enjoyed every minute! He and Leona's time was filled with delightful drives, searching for out of the way dining spots, interesting festivals, antiques, hobbies of investments and stock market tracking, and all that made his heart sing. Travel with family was always a highlight filled with adventure and curiosity. We all chuckled at his very few gray hairs and his sharp-as-a-tack mind would give most young'uns a run for their money! Topics to include current events, politics, sports, business were always approached, well-versed, with ease and he never offered an opinion unless asked.

As the cliché goes, he never met a stranger. He embraced people in a joyful, and helpful manner that endeared him to all he encountered. His calm demeanor could ease any situation and his steady presence always reassuring.

A wonderful son, a loving husband, a devoted Dad, a cherished Granddad and a loyal friend.

A life well-lived for a genuinely good man. He will be deeply missed by all whose lives he touched.

Cemetery

Memory Gardens Cemetery

2501 East Euclid Ave.
Arlington Heights, IL, 60004

Events

JUN 8 **Visitation** 03:00PM - 08:00PM

Muzyka & Son Funeral Home
5776 West Lawrence Avenue, Chicago, IL, US,
60630

JUN 9 **Chapel Service** 11:30AM

Muzyka & Son Funeral Home
5776 West Lawrence Avenue, Chicago, IL, US,
60630

Comments



“ A tribute video has been added.



Muzyka & Son Funeral Home - June 07, 2018 at 01:45 PM



“ I didn't find this video until just tonight. Duane is my second cousin and although virtually all of the pictures are unknown to me, it's great seeing all of them.

Tony - September 15, 2020 at 09:16 PM



“ A webcast video has been added.



Muzyka & Son Funeral Home - June 06, 2018 at 04:27 PM



“ My sympathy to the family of Cecil Duane. My grandmother and his grandfather were brother and sister. I have many fond memories of Uncle Charlie coming over to my grandmothers house in his old blue Chevrolet when I was there. They spent a lot of time together after Aunt Annie died. I don't remember Lawrence as well as I remember Olive. I enjoyed reading the obituary. He sounds like he had a wonderful life. I live about 40 miles south of Colchester and I get up there every Labor Day week-end for the celebration. My grandmother was Dollie Coghill Rigg, my mother Juanita Rigg Butcher and I am Janice Butcher Schlueter.

Janice Schlueter - June 08, 2018 at 08:43 PM



“ 55 files added to the album LifeTributes



Muzyka & Son Funeral Home - June 07, 2018 at 12:41 PM



“ From: Billy, Melissa, Megan, and Emily Dares purchased the Sacred Duty Spray for the family of Mr. Cecil Duane Coghill.



From: Billy, Melissa, Megan, and Emily Dares - June 06, 2018 at 05:24 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. Cecil Duane Coghill.



June 06, 2018 at 01:20 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Cecil Duane Coghill.



June 06, 2018 at 12:34 PM



“ The Sadoski Family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mr. Cecil Duane Coghill.



The Sadoski Family - June 06, 2018 at 12:17 PM



“ Leona, Bill, and Alisa. I'm sorry about the passing of Duane. He was such a kind man and I have fond memories of his infectious laughter. He will be remembered fondly by the whole family. Sending you hugs during this most difficult time.
Diana (Little) Wozniak

Diana Wozniak - June 06, 2018 at 10:31 AM



“ I met Duane and Leona in the early 60's when we lived next door to them in Oak Park during my grade school years. I remember Duane bringing out a little B/W TV via a very long extension cord so we could sit in his yard and watch the first moon landing! He was the best neighbor you could ask for, always fun to be around and made the best fudge! But my favorite memory of Duane is Christmas Eve each year. My family would head off to church and when we got back home mysteriously our presents from Santa and our parents were under our tree. Although Duane would never admit that he was 'Santa's helper' each year, I know in my heart he was and will always remember him for his kindness towards our family for over 50 years. He was one in a million. Sharon and Jeff Powell



Sharon Powell - June 05, 2018 at 04:53 PM