

William C. "Coach Bill" Hanson, 77, of Pittsburg, KS, passed away Monday, January 2, 2017 at his residence.

He was born September 11, 1939 at Rochester, N.H., the son of Conrad C. and Janet F. (Raynor) Hanson. On June 14, 1959, he was united in marriage to Phyllis A. Kasselmann, ("Roberds") at Great Bend, Kansas. Bill attended La Puente High School in La Puente, California and graduated from Ottawa University with a degree in Education in 1961 and later achieved a Master's Degree in Education from Kansas State Teachers College, now Pittsburg State University in 1969.

Coach Hanson had two passions in his life. One was his love of family and friends and the other was his love of the game of basketball. Coach Hanson's coaching career started in Montezuma, a small town in west-central Kansas, in 1961 where he achieved a record of 28 wins and 12 losses over a 2-year period. His next coaching stint was in Tribune, Kansas from 1963 until 1968 where he led the boys basketball team to a state title in 1968, with an amazing winning percentage of 87%. Next, he coached at Labette County High School through 1970 where again his tremendous coaching skills led the Grizzlies to new levels of success.

In 1971, Coach Hanson took his coaching talents to Pittsburg High School inheriting a boys basketball program that was in need of a new approach to winning through hard work and discipline. By implementing Coach Hanson's tried and true program of success, the Pittsburg High School boys basketball program saw a tremendous turn around and had a 36 win and 12 loss record through 1974.

Coach then decided to take his skills and apply them in the business world when he moved to California in 1975. Coach Hanson stayed in the business world for thirty years primarily in the San Diego area. He started numerous businesses and was successful to one degree or another in all of his ventures. No matter his amount of success in the business world he couldn't get the love of coaching basketball out of his blood.

Coach Hanson returned to Pittsburg in 2005 where he took over coaching the girls and boys basketball programs at Pittsburg Community Middle School. Over the next ten years Coach Hanson's teams played an average of approximately 150 games per year for both the girls and boys teams,

including varsity, junior varsity and c teams for both the 7th and 8th grades. From 2005 to 2015, Coach Hanson coached over 1,500 basketball games, winning 1,150 of those games for a 77% winning percentage. Coach always gave credit to his teams for the winning records achieved during his coaching career and up until his death continued to be very active in support of many local high school and middle school basketball programs. If the Dragons played a basketball game, Coach was always there and was usually greeted by many of his players that had gone on to achieve success in their own lives. The culmination of Coach Hanson's success came when he was named Kansas Middle School Coach of the Year by the Kansas Basketball Coaches Association.

There were many reasons why Coach was so successful with his love of people, especially those most unfortunate, being one of the most important. But those that knew him well understood in addition to his love of family and friends he tried to live by a motto that made him special. Coach Hanson's motto states "Wake up in the morning, go out in the world and make life better, because you are there. Find something special to say to each and every person you meet no matter how hard it may be."

Survivors include a son, Brad Hanson and wife, Jennifer of Monett, MO; two daughters, Tara Snow and husband, Brad, of Pittsburg and Stacey Webb and husband, Rick of Pittsburg; eight grandchildren, Adam Hanson and wife Sara, Abby Hanson and fiancé Spencer Graham, Ali Hanson, Aaron Snow, Maggie Snow, Annie Snow, Megan Webb and Jake Webb; and three great grandchildren Briley Hanson, Kinsley Hanson, and Whitley Hanson.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Services will be held at 10 a.m. Friday (Jan 6) at the Lighthouse Temple Church of God and Christ located at 202 West 9th Street in Pittsburg, KS, with Bishop Walter N. Simpson officiating. Burial will follow in the Garden of Memories Cemetery.

The family will receive friends from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday at the Brenner Mortuary.

The family suggests memorials to the USD 250 Foundation to set up a scholarship in Bill's name. These may be left at or mailed to the Brenner Mortuary, 114 East 4th St., Pittsburg, KS 66762.

Friends may also send condolences online at www.brennertmortuary.com.