? Former North Harrison Superintendent and former IHSAA Commissioner C. Eugene Cato, 77, of Zionsville died Sunday, October 19. “Gene” was born and reared in Southern Indiana.

He graduated from Oakland City H.S. (1949) where he played basketball for his father, Alva F. Cato. He went on to become a star basketball player at Oakland City College – graduating in 1952.

He served as a teacher and coach at Chandler, Boonville, and Zionsville High Schools; a Principal at Huntingburg High School; and was a former Superintendent at North Harrison Schools and Jay County School Corporation. Flowing from his passion for athletics and his belief in the intrinsic value of athletic competition on the formation of a child’s character, Gene accepted an invitation to become an IHSAA Assistant Commissioner in 1976. He became the Commissioner of the IHSAA in 1983 – providing leadership until he retired in 1995.

He was married to his high school sweetheart, Lillian Lou Moore. Lillian – herself an elementary teacher for 33 years – shared Gene’s passion to influence student athletes with an equal emphasis on the “student” and the “athlete.” They spent 58 years together teaching, coaching, leading and loving thousands of students and their parents.

Cato is survived by his wife, Lillian, his sister, Linda (Jim) of Zionsville and daughters: Cathy Lewis (Denny) of Jasper, Beth Fetters(Mark) of Carmel, and Angie Valentine (Jon) of Zionsville; six grandsons and two granddaughters: and one great-granddaughter.

Contributions can be made to the C. Eugene Cato Memorial Scholarship Fund and mailed to - IHSAA, 9150 North Meridian Street, P.O. Box 40650, Indianapolis, IN 46240.

Services were held on Thursday, October 23, at the Zionsville Fellowship Church.