



Francis "Spitz" A. Sparagna

Francis "Spitz" Sparagna, 86, of Millville, passed away peacefully with his wife and children at his bedside on February 10, 2015. A native of Vineland, he graduated from Sacred Heart High School where he starred in basketball and baseball. He was named All City Team in basketball, three years in a row and led his team as captain to its best record at the time. He attended St. Joseph's University on an athletic scholarship, where he batted clean up hitter for all 4 years of college. He still co-owns the record at St. Joe's for the most runs batted in a single game (8). After a brief stint in the minor leagues, he joined his father and brother in the family's clothing manufacturing business, South Jersey Clothing Inc. and worked there until his retirement in 1990. He continued playing sports in the local basketball and baseball leagues. He won several MVP awards, home run titles and local championships in the baseball league. He was inducted into the Greater Vineland Baseball League Hall of Fame. He won several MVP awards and championships in the local basketball league during the same period. He was inducted into the Sacred Heart High Athletic Hall of Fame in 2010. After he retired from basketball and baseball, he continued playing golf at a high level into his 70's. In 1950, he married Carmela DiTomo to whom he remained married until his death. As an amateur singer, musician and actor, he enriched the lives of his wife and children by being more than just an athlete with song and music. As an avid reader with a keen intellect, he wrote opinion pieces for the Catholic Star Herald as well as for local newspapers including the Daily Journal. He became an entertainment chairman for the Sacred Heart Church and in 1975 and 1976 he raised money by acquiring the Harry James Band and Count Basie Band, respectively. In the late 1970's he created Forum For Awareness and he brought into our community high profile media luminaries including William F. Buckley Jr, Sam Donaldson, John Dean and Pat Buchanan.

He is survived by wife of 64 years, Carmela (DiTomo) Sparagna; son & daughter-in-law, Francis & Diana (Biafora) Sparagna; daughter, Stephanie Sparagna; son, Jack Sparagna; daughter, Cynthia Sparagna; son & daughter-in-law, Timothy & Tammy (McDonnell) Sparagna; daughter, Danielle Sparagna; son & daughter-in-law, Philip & Marcia (Glazier) Sparagna; daughter & son in law, Victoria & Mikael Borjesson; grandchildren, June Sparagna Ward, Francis Sparagna III, Daniel Sparagna, Jacqueline Sparagna, Timothy Sparagna Jr., Calle Borjesson and Niklas Borjesson; three great-grandchildren, Rebecca Sparagna, Samuel Ward & Rosabella Ward and his brother, Angelo Sparagna Jr.. Francis was predeceased by his parents, Angelo & Leonora (Magliano) Sparagna and his sister, Jean Sparagna.

A Church Visitation will be held on Saturday from 10am to 12pm followed by a Funeral Mass at 12:15 pm from Christ The Good Shepherd Parish - Church Of Sacred Heart, 1010 East Landis Avenue, Vineland. Interment will follow in Sacred Heart Cemetery, Vineland.

Donations in memory of "Spitz" can be made to:

ALS Association, Greater Philadelphia Chapter, 321 Norristown Road, Suite 260, Ambler, PA 19002 or online at: alsassoc@alsphiladelphia.org

Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Office of Institutional Advancement

125 South 9th Street, Suite 700, Philadelphia, PA 19107 or online at: advancement@jefferson.edu

ARRANGEMENTS are under the supervision of Rone Funeral Service, 1110 East Chestnut Avenue, Vineland, NJ 08360

To send online condolences please visit our website at www.RONEFUNERALSERVICE.com