

*Provided by Fuller Funeral Home-Cremation
Service*

Charles K Orsborn

November 17, 1917 ~ May 7, 2017 (age 99)



Services

A service summary is not available

Charles "Ozzie" Orsborn, the former Bradley University men's basketball coach and athletic director, and a Naples, FL resident since 1978, died Sunday morning, May 7, 2017. A member of the NIT, Missouri Valley Conference and Greater Peoria (Illinois) Halls of Fame, Orsborn was 99. Born in Chicago, IL, he was the son of the late Charles and Edna Mae (nee Stanger) Orsborn. Charles was a graduate of Bradley University in Peoria, IL, Class of 1939. He had a standout college athletic career earning varsity letters for track, basketball and football. He was a member of the Bradley University Basketball "Famous Five" and was inducted into ODK, the National Honors Fraternity.

After college, Charles played baseball for the New York Yankees minor league. He married the former Janet Moore in 1942. Captain Orsborn went into the US Army Air Corps as a Special Services officer serving from 1941 - 1946. In the reserve until 1961, he retired as Lt. Col.

Charles taught Physical Education and coached basketball and baseball at Bradley starting in 1947. He completed his Master in Science at Bradley in 1951 and became Athletic Director at Bradley in 1965, the position he held until his retirement in 1978.

Janet and Charles spent their retirement in Southwest Florida. He was an active member of the Naples Chapter 1020 of the BPOE and was past president of the Marco Island-Naples Reserve Officers Association.

Florida Gulf Coast University athletic director Ken Kavanagh was the Bradley AD from 1996-2009. He called Orsborn an "icon." In fact, during his tenure at Bradley, Kavanagh changed the name of the Braves' most prestigious student-athlete honor to the Charles Orsborn Award.

Kavanagh, who along with his wife, Mary, became good friends with Orsborn, will never forget the introduction early in his Bradley days. "I'd never met him, but I'd heard about him -- he was a legendary person with a rough exterior but a heart of gold," Kavanagh said. "So he comes in to the area where my office was and I hear this voice -- I'd never heard him before -- saying, 'Where's the young

punk?' "I looked out and, sure enough, it was Coach Orsborn." They talked about an hour and a relationship was born.

Orsborn and wife, Janet vacationed at their cottage in Wisconsin each year and stopped by Bradley's Peoria campus on the way during the summers and on the way home in early falls. When Kavanagh was introduced as FGCU's second full-time athletic director in June 2009, a beaming Orsborn was on hand. "The best part, really, was that I got to spend a lot more time with him when we moved down here," Kavanagh said. "Unfortunately, shortly after we got here his wife passed away, so here he was in his early 90s. He had really good neighbors next door to him, and Mary and I would take him out to dinner probably once every couple months."

That carried on until about three years ago, when Orsborn's dementia worsened. Still, Kavanagh visited when he could. "He couldn't remember what happened five seconds ago, but if you got him talking about the old days at Bradley and his career, he loved telling stories about him and (Kentucky coach Adolph) Rupp doing a clinic in China or Tokyo or somewhere and then all the different games he played and Chet Walker and the great players he coached. "For me, it was a heart-warming situation. But then it was bittersweet because his health deteriorated and we lost that." That carried on until about three years ago, when Orsborn's dementia worsened. Still, Kavanagh visited when he could.

([https://www.usatoday.com/sports/mlb/scores/USA TODAY | Sports](https://www.usatoday.com/sports/mlb/scores/USA%20TODAY%20Sports))

Charles "Ozzie" Orsborn is survived by his daughter, Carolyn J. Orsborn and granddaughter, Rhonda. He was preceded in death by his wife, Janet in 2007; sons, Charles K., III and James. No services are planned at this time.