



Charles H. Espanet Jr.

November 29, 1920 - March 9, 2017

Resided in Hopedale, MA

Obituary

Charles H. "Charlie" Espanet Jr., 96, of Hopedale passed away peacefully after a brief illness Thursday March 9, 2017 at Countryside Healthcare in Milford. He was the husband of Regina A. (Casasanta) Espanet for 74 wonderful years.

Mr. Espanet was a teacher, coach, athletic director and guidance counselor at Milford High School where he worked for 38 years. He was also the campus representative for Northeastern University's evening adult education program at the school for several years.

Born November 29, 1920 in Milford, the son of the late Charles H. Espanet Sr. and Jennie (Beltrame) Espanet, Charlie was an outstanding three-sport athlete at Milford High. Immediately upon graduating in 1938 he was signed by the Detroit Tigers and played baseball for their minor league team in Beaumont, TX. When a sore arm sidelined his career, Charlie returned to Milford, earned a degree in small tool design from Wentworth Institute, and married his childhood sweetheart. Several years later he returned briefly to the Tiger's organization as a regional baseball scout.

During WWII, Mr. Espanet was a B-29 mechanic in the US Army Air Corps from 1943-1945. Following his service, he accepted a baseball scholarship at Boston University and captained the Terrier baseball squad for three years. After receiving a BS in Education in 1948, he began his career at Milford High School. As a mentor and educator, Charlie always inspired his students to seek academic excellence.

From 1954 through 1961, "Coach" Espanet's baseball teams posted a record of 110 -23 - winning a state championship in 1958. In 1972 he was inducted into the Massachusetts Baseball Coaches' Hall of Fame. A hard-nosed competitor, Espanet drove his players and teams to success on the field by instilling a winning attitude based on hard work, strength of character, discipline, respect, and teamwork. He was

proud that many of his students and players went on to have successful careers as educators and coaches in their own right. Upon retiring from coaching and sports administration, Charlie served for 25 years as a respected local high school basketball referee and baseball umpire. From 1963 - 1976 he was also Sports Director at WMRC where he hosted the popular "Sports Parade" weekdays at 5:30 PM, and handled football color and play-by-play announcing for Milford High games.

A Hopedale resident for nearly 70 years, Mr. Espanet was a sensible voice in town matters, and was appointed to several terms on the Zoning Board of Appeals. From 1948-1973 he worked each summer at the Hopedale Town Park and Pond where he served as Recreation Director from 1964 until his retirement.

Charlie was a longtime member of: The Plains Association, where he was 2006 "Man of the Year," American Legion Post '59 of Milford, the Internal Association of Approved Basketball Officials (IAABO), the Milford Men's Basketball Association, Hopedale Country Club, and the Massachusetts Broadcasters Association. He was also a founding member of the Milford Baseball Umpire Association. In his earlier years Charlie enjoyed golfing, skiing, ice skating, gardening, travelling, and fishing and relaxing at the Wawbeek cottage on North Pond.

In addition to his wife Regina, of 74 years, he is survived by two sons: Charles and his wife Melissa, and Richard and his wife Kathleen, all of Hopedale; five grandchildren: Jaclyn and her husband Frank Dorr, Steven, Kevin, Mark and Brian Espanet; two great grandchildren Mason and Charley Dorr; and several nieces and nephews. He was pre-deceased by his sister Claire Taylor and brother John "Sliver" Espanet.

Visiting hours will be Monday March 13, 2017 from 5-8 PM at the BUMA-SARGEANT FUNERAL HOME, 42 Congress St., Milford.

Funeral services will be held from the funeral home Thursday, March 16, 2017 at 9AM followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 10AM in Sacred Heart Church, 187 Hopedale St., Hopedale.

Burial will follow at the Hopedale Village Cemetery.