



David Gottschalk Sr.

March 28, 1931 - April 20, 2018

David George Gottschalk Sr. aka "Diamond Dave" passed away peacefully at his home in W. Bloomfield Twp. on Friday April 20, 2018. He was 87 years old and died from a long illness with mantle cell lymphoma.

Born in Detroit to parents Arthur and Laura Gottschalk Sr. in 1931. Dave grew up in the Detroit area and attended Redford High School where he excelled in basketball and baseball. In 1953 he married his childhood sweetheart Mary Schach at St. Mary's of Redford Catholic Church. He went on to advance his education at Western Michigan University earning his B.S. and Master's degree. A second baseman for the Broncos, he was a two-time Second Team All American (1952-53), a two time All District Team honoree (1952-53) and a three-time All Mid-American Conference First team selection. He played on two MAC Championship teams and was the first WMU second baseman to earn All-League Honors. Dave helped Western post a three-year record of 21-1 and reach its first College World Series in 1952. The Philadelphia Phillies signed Dave and he spent three seasons in their system hitting .309 with 19 homeruns and 99 rbi's in 1956. A knee injury ended his minor league career.

He was called to duty by the army and gained the rank of Second Lieutenant serving two years. After his service in the Army Dave continued to play baseball in various area baseball leagues leading the Kalamazoo Federation League in hitting (1959) and was the MVP of the state tournament. He helped his Detroit Federation team win two national titles. He started his teaching career at South Haven High School and then Birmingham Groves where he served as the Varsity Baseball coach for ten years during which the Falcons posted 7 winning seasons and won a Northwest Suburban League Title. His players gave him the nickname "Diamond Dave" because he spent so much time grooming the baseball field and was the first person to put grass in the infield at Groves. He retired from teaching after 38 years in 1995. He continued his career by playing softball in various local leagues and was actively involved in the Michigan Senior Olympics well into his 70's. He was a member of the first Michigan team to win a world championship at the 1991 Senior Softball World Series and also won a gold medal in softball at the 1999 Senior Olympics held at the Disney World Sports Complex in Orlando. Dave's greatest honor was when he was inducted into the Western Michigan baseball Hall of Fame in 2000.

Dave and Mary both loved spending time with the family and went on many trips especially to their cottage in the U.P. Fishing was also one of his favorite pastimes as well as following U of M athletics and playing Hearts. He had season tickets to the Michigan Football games for 27 years. Dave instilled the joy of laughter in his family. He had a great sense of humor and loved to make people laugh.

He leaves behind his wife Mary of 64 years, Daughter Debbie (Don) of Grand Rapids, Son David (Sue) of White Lake and Son Chuck (Candy) of Laconia NH, 6 Grandchildren and 2 Great Grandchildren.

A memorial mass will be held on Tuesday, April 24th at 11 a.m. at St. Owen Catholic Church, Bloomfield Hills.

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