

Paul E. LaPalme

Leominster, retired professional
baseball player ; 86

LEOMINSTER -- Paul E. LaPalme, 86 years young and long-time resident of Leominster, passed away peacefully on Sunday, February 7, 2010 at Health Alliance Hospital, after bravely battling an extended illness. He was surrounded by his beloved family.

Paul or "Lefty" LaPalme as he was well known was born in Springfield MA, the son of Philip and Bella (Charpentier) LaPalme. He served in the army in WWII, stationed in central Europe. As a youngster, he had a gift and passion for baseball. Raised during the depression and one of five children, his beginnings were humble. Yet his drive and dream were strong and gave rise to a burning inspiration that would propel him to a career as a professional ballplayer. At age 16 Paul's pitching ability was recognized and talent scouts invited him to the minor leagues. As Paul's talents developed he was recruited to the "Big Leagues" in the early 1950's. Over the next seven years he pitched for the Pittsburgh Pirates, Chicago White Sox and St. Louis Cardinals.

After baseball, he took on a new venture - the engraving business, where he owned and operated LaPalme Engravers on Nashua Street. He also found ways to express his creative side through designing and constructing beautiful tiffany lamps (a family tradition), as well as skillfully crafting rifles, with intricate checkering patters and hand-carved stocks, but sports was never far from his mind. He took up golf and became an avid golfer winning numerous tournaments and becoming the NE left handed champion. He even worked as a ranger at Red Tail Golf Course, up until June of 2009. And, in the earlier years he was frequently spotted on a racing cycle, speed skates, or cross-country skis, enjoying every minute.

But, Paul would tell you that while he did all these things, his greatest accomplishments were his family and friends. He met the girl of his dreams in Bristol, Virginia, Bettye Ann and they married in 1947. They raised three children, Paula, Michael and Terri. His deep pride for his family and genuine regard for everyone he knew and met drew people to him like a magnet. He was well known for his gracious smile and gentleness, while his random acts of kindness touched the lives of others, often perfect strangers. He was always ready to lend an encouraging word, tell a good joke and spent countless hours helping aspiring young pitchers improve their skills and confidence.

He was a member of Leominster Sportsman's Club, Leominster Lodge of Elks, Major League Baseball Players Alumni and St. Leo's parish.

Paul led a full and rich life and will be missed, but never forgotten. He leaves behind his adoring family: his wife Bettye of 63 years, his children Paula, Michael, Terri, his sister Pauline Macy of California, his grandchildren Nicholas, Joshua, Cortlyn, great- grandchild Kailynne, his son-in-law Joseph and daughter's-in-law Christine and Laura. And he leaves his "extended family" of numerous friends (too large to print) who Paul loved and cherished.

LaPALME -- The Funeral will be held from the Brandon Funeral Home, 305 Wanoosnoc Rd., Friday, February 12, 2010, with a Mass at 10:00 A.M. at St. Leos, Leominster. Calling hours are Thursday 5-8 P.M. in the funeral home; burial will be in St. Leos Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial donations be made to the [National Kidney Foundation](#) of Massachusetts, 85 Astor Ave., Suite 2, Norwood, MA, 02062.

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