



Jim Schmidt

April 12, 1941 - April 6, 2023

Our beloved Coach, Jim Schmidt, left this earthly field for a heavenly one on Thursday, April 6, 2023. Throughout his life, he gave his best and loved with his whole heart. His life lessons of friendship, family bonds, community service and genuine sportsmanship are a legacy that will live on through his children, grandchildren, extended family and friends.

Always a proud “Mound Mohawk,” Jim played baseball, basketball and football throughout high school. After graduation, he earned his commercial electrician’s license at Dunwoody Technical Institute and was a loyal member of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) 292 for 43 years. Jim worked as a commercial electrician throughout his life, providing well for his family. But his love of sports never wavered. Jim played men’s fast pitch softball for Byerly’s and other teams into his 60’s. And he was a sought-after umpire for Twin Cities’ and surrounding states well into his 70’s. He also coached his daughters’ and son’s softball teams through their school years and beyond. Many of his daughters’ friends still call him “Coach” to this day.

He always enjoyed a good game. Jim was a season-ticket holder to the Minnesota Vikings and attended many Northstars, Wild and Gopher games, as well as following his grandchildren in their sports endeavors – gymnastics, hockey, baseball, volleyball, football and lacrosse.

Jim married his high school sweetheart (and cheerleader) Sue Burch, on July 7, 1962, the same year the Minnesota Gophers made it to the Rose Bowl – and won! They “road-

tripped” with friends to attend that game in Pasadena. Jim and Sue raised three children in their home on Lake Minnetonka. Family was at the center of everything they did, including traveling to Jim’s softball games to head up the cheering section. A widower for the past 13 years, Jim has continued to make family the center of his life, living with his family and traveling with them.

In recent years, he toured Washington DC, New York City, Chicago, Sanibel Island, Sedona, Gold Canyon, Las Vegas, the Black Hills, and California – and he cruised Lake Vermilion on a houseboat. Always ready for adventure, he traveled with family members to Mexico, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy. And until his last trip to Arizona this year, his energy and enthusiasm never flagged – he was not a sit and watch type of guy.

Jim was also an avid hunter, fisherman and outdoorsman and enjoyed many hunting trips with friends to Emily and Hermann, Minnesota, as well as pheasant hunting in the Dakotas. And he fished his beloved Lake Minnetonka summer and winter (mostly when it was legal to do so). To hear Jim tell it, he caught a lot of prize winning fish over the years, although we have no photographic proof of that. He had a wry sense of humor, so for all we know, those stories could actually be true.

Jim was also a dedicated community servant. He and his wife, Sue, were active in Jaycee’s, Lions and the Gillespie Senior Center in Mound for many years. Jim was honored with the Melvin Jones Fellowship, the Lions’ highest humanitarian service award. And he served on the facility board at the Gillespie Center.

A few years ago, Jim was diagnosed with Progressive Supranuclear Palsy, and even as this disease took away his physical ability, he never complained. The Mayo Clinic helped Jim and the family deal with the life changes brought on by PSP. Only 20,000 people have ever been diagnosed with this very rare disease and little is known about it. True to form, Jim’s last act of community service was to donate his brain to Mayo Clinic in the hope that their research will help others. Special thanks to brother and sister-in-law Ed and Karen and Jeannine Baden for their loving care of Jim. The family also wants to especially recognize and thank Park Nicollet Hospice home care team and nurse Erin, and Jim’s private nurse, Martha, for their support and extraordinary care.

James Allen Schmidt was born in Watertown, Minnesota on April 12, 1941, to Will and Ina Schmidt. He is survived by his son Mark (Carlyn) Schmidt, and granddaughters Teagan (Thomas Elliott) and Kennedy; daughter Nancy (Greg) Riebel and grandsons Tanner (Meghan) and Logan (Johanna); daughter Karen DeLorenzo (Jim Lee); and family dogs Carman and Daisy. He is also survived by his brother Ed (Karen) Schmidt; sister-in-law Caryl Schmidt; in-laws Barb and Dave Verville; Jack and Marion Burch. He is preceded in death by his wife, Sue Schmidt; brother, Loren Schmidt; and parents, Will and Ina Schmidt. Jim’s smile and great hugs will be greatly missed by his many nieces and nephews, cousins and dear friends.

We raise a toast to Jim’s extraordinary life in true Jim Schmidt style. When ordering a glass of Pinot Grigio in Italy, he settled for “Pi-no Grig-Leo.” And in New York, he always asked his grandson to order a “You Ber” for a ride home if they were going to have a

drink with dinner. Here’s to you, Jim. Wonder how long it will take you to find a team to coach on the field of dreams?

Celebration of Life will be held at St. Martin’s by the Lake Episcopal Church in Minnetonka Beach on Friday, May 5 at 4pm, with a reception at the Gillespie Center, 2590 Commerce Blvd., Mound following the service.

Memorials preferred to St. Martin's by the Lake Episcopal Church or the Gillespie Center.

Celebration of Jim's Life

 Friday, May 5th 4 PM

 St. Martin's by the Lake Episcopal Church, 2801 Westwood Road, Minnetonka, MN

Driving Directions