



Ralph Eugene Sackett

October 27, 1937 - August 18, 2021

Ralph Eugene Sackett passed away Wednesday, August 18, 2021 surrounded by his family and much love. Ralph was born in St. Louis, Missouri to a humble loving home. Tilda Mae and Sam raised him and his brothers, Don (deceased) and Joe in Collinsville, Illinois to be honest and hard working. In high school, he excelled in baseball and was drafted by the Baltimore Orioles. His coach encouraged him to visit Illinois Wesleyan University to see if that might be a better fit. After one visit, benefactor Dale McMackin helped him to receive a full scholarship, a meal work exchange and housing, making him the first in his family to attend and graduate college.

In his freshman year, Ralph met the love of his life, Alicia Ann Westwood. After playfully stealing her freshman beanie cap, they dated and wed their senior year and were happily married for 61 years. Ralph played third base for the Titans throughout college and began coaching the Bloomington Bobcats, an all star college team while earning his Masters in mathematics at Illinois State University. He went on to teach and coach numerous sports at Reddick and Octavia High Schools, Washington University, and Granite City High School before finishing up his coaching career at Bloomington High School. His baseball, cross country and basketball teams all excelled under his direction. In 1975, he began a new career in banking with Bloomington Federal Savings & Loan which took him and his family to Champaign, Illinois. He added real estate development to his resume completing the Robeson

Crossing development in southwest Champaign at the end of his working career.

In his free time, Ralph enjoyed golf, fishing and cheering on his St. Louis Cardinals. In retirement, he and Alicia loved spending time with family and relaxing in Naples, Florida and at their cabin in the woods on Lake Napowan, Wisconsin. He was an avid fisherman and took great pleasure in fish fries around the fire with those he loved. (His fish were a favorite for even the non-fish eaters!)

Ralph is survived by his dear Alicia, four loving children; Robb (Mary Beth), Jill Burton (Gregory), Todd (Kandi), and Matt (Jennifer), 11 adoring grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Also known for his big bear hugs and his beautiful smile, "Papa" will be greatly missed by those who knew him.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. Memorial donations may be made to:

Parkinson's Association Of SW Florida
2575 Northbroke Plaza Dr.
Building 300, Suite301
Naples, Florida 34119

Tribute Wall

DK

“ Robb,
My condolences for your loss. I was just thinking about your father's teams (and you) the other day while doing yard work. Prayers and blessings.

Doug Knuth - September 03, 2021 at 05:38 PM

DL

“ Sackett family, I am sorry for your loss. But I will say it was my benefit and honor to know and work with Ralph. He gave me a great opportunity when I came back to Champaign and it is an experience that has helped my construction career ever since.
To all of you I send a great big hug.
Love you Sackett's.
Drew Livingston

Drew Livingston - September 01, 2021 at 04:38 PM

PM

“ Alicia and Family:
We've lost a true friend. One I've come to admire and who's company and friendship I always looked forward to and appreciated. Ralph was a man of honor, the likes of which few can claim. He made our time together "special". May he rest in peace and may the good Lord bless you all.

Paul McCarrick

Paul McCarrick - August 27, 2021 at 10:07 AM

DS

“ Alicia and Family, We are so sorry to hear about Ralph's death. What a wonderful life he had as detailed in his beautiful obituary. We will never forget how you welcomed us to The Ridge and how Ralph introduced Doug to the Tuesday/Friday Golf Game and the cast of characters that played. The Annual Fish Frys at the end of the season will always be remembered. We are both better off for having Ralph as a friend and send our heartfelt thoughts and prayers to the entire family.

Sue and Doug Schuemann
Placida, Florida
Champaign, Illinois

Doug and Sue Schuemann - August 26, 2021 at 05:10 PM

BB

“ Sackett Family,

I am so sorry for your loss. I have so many wonderful memories of life on Garfield Dr. It some ways seems like yesterday. The memories evolved to High School Basketball and the "Sackett" defense. It helped us get to the state tournament! Then went on to play the "Sackett" defense at IWU. The legacy lives on! Many, many fond memories. Thoughts and prayers with the family.

Blaise Bugajski - August 25, 2021 at 06:01 PM

RS

Thank you Blaise! And I learned a little up and under move I love while you were beating me 20 times a day 1 x 1. 😊

Robb Sackett - August 26, 2021 at 08:26 PM

SO

“ So sorry to hear of Sackett family loss. Worked with Ralph for many years and knew the family well. Our most heartfelt sympathy to the family. Stan and Alice Ommen

Stan Ommen - August 25, 2021 at 02:02 PM

FW

“ I have always been a lover of high school basketball. Ralph Sackett was one of the best, if not the best, coaches I ever saw. RIP coach.

Frank Wilcoxson - August 25, 2021 at 09:20 AM

AR

“ Sackett Family. We are so sorry for your loss. I have great memories of hanging out with Jill and Robb at your house on Oakland Ave, bussing dishes at Laubs Restaurant and Ralphs big smile! Tim loved all the tail gate parties outside of Memorial Stadium. We are happy we got to know Ralph and our thoughts and prayers are with all of you at this time.

Angie and Tim Romani

Angie Romani - August 24, 2021 at 10:48 PM

DH

“ Sackett Family, so sorry for your loss. Ralph was such an important part of my business life, he was a great mentor for many years and I will be forever grateful for the confidence he showed in me. I always looked forward to seeing him when I was lucky enough to attend the Bloomington Golf Open in Ft Myers during the winter. RIP!

David Hurst - August 24, 2021 at 07:45 PM

JT

“ Alicia and Family - Joan and I are very saddened at the news of Ralph’s passing. He was a great friend and a caring soul to all. He always spoke so proudly of his loving family and the many athletes he nurtured over the years. Ralph exemplified the true meaning of the well earned title of “coach.”

I have been honored to share the Sigma Chi brotherhood with Ralph. We were instant friends from the moment we shook hands. It was my pleasure to share his love of a fine bourbon and a story well told. He will be missed.

Our prayers of comfort to you and your family

Larry and Joan Trowel

jJoan&Larry Trowel - August 24, 2021 at 01:38 PM

EN

*Dear Alicia,
Dan and I send our heartfelt sympathies on the loss of Ralph...
We hold you up in prayer...
Dan and Elizabeth Nelson*

Elizabeth Nelson - August 26, 2021 at 08:35 AM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Ralph Eugene Sackett.



August 24, 2021 at 11:37 AM

JB

“ So sorry to hear about Ralph’s passing. We so enjoyed all the great and fun times we shared with Ralph, Alicia and family in Bloomington and Pensacola/Perdido Key. Please accept our sincere condolences and prayers from our family.

Jo Ann Bowers

Jo Ann Bowers - August 24, 2021 at 11:30 AM

MJ

“ Alicia and the entire family please accept my sincere condolences on the loss of coach. May the memories of many years with his presence be long lasting for the family.

I had the chance a couple of years ago on a Sunday afternoon to speak with coach over the phone. It had been many years since speaking to him. I hope I conveyed how much he made a difference in my life by being part of the BHS Basketball team. Often, what we learn comes with reflection and that was the case for me. Who knows what or where I would have ended up doing if not for the discipline and guidance I received from coach Sackett.

Prayers to all the family.

Mike Jones - August 24, 2021 at 10:13 AM

CK

“ Alicia, It was with sadness I read Ralph's obituary this morning. He was a favorite teacher of mine at Octavia. He was special and you always felt like he cared about you and whatever your need was. Good memories. I pray God's peace and loving presence will be a comfort to you and your family at this time and in the coming days.

Caryl (Brandt) Krieg, Class of '62

Caryl Brandt Krieg - August 24, 2021 at 10:05 AM

DS

“ Alicia, so sorry to hear of Ralph passing. I lost my husband a year ago on Aug 21st.

Deb Summitt - August 24, 2021 at 09:04 AM



“ To Alicia and all of the family, I am so sad for your loss. You all are in our prayers. As a pledge and 1959 initiate into Sigma Chi at IWU I always looked up to Ralph. He treated us young guys with respect and dignity while showing himself as the leader of the pack.

Alicia, you were the greatest Sweetheart of Sigma Chi! Do you remember getting a telegram from Sigma Chi brother John Wayne? That was my hairbrained idea. I don't know how I got through to his secretary in Hollywood, but I did. When I told her we were having our Sweetheart dance her reply was, "Oh did you want John to come, he's in Mexico filming Rio Bravo?" I just asked her for a note addressed to you and she promised me it would happen. Several days before the dance I received a telegram from Mexico. It was addressed to you and we were able to present it to you that night along with your bouquet of traditional EX white roses.

I'm sure you have had a wonderful life with Ralph and have so many memories to sustain you in the coming years. To Ralph, as Sigs say, "ALL HONOR TO HIS NAME" !

Ron Zehr class of 1962

PS: if you have a Sig house or alumni chapter anywhere near your memorial service location, the ultimate Sigma Chi honor for Ralph would be to have them add a White Rose Ceremony - it is very meaningful and touching, and they would be honored to do it.

Ron Zehr - August 24, 2021 at 08:22 AM

CF

“ Todd sorry to hear about your dad both your parents are and we're great people from Roger and Connie darin and Brian parents

connie ferguson - August 23, 2021 at 08:32 PM

TA

“ Matt,
Condolences to you and your family.
Todd A.

Todd Adamson - August 23, 2021 at 05:35 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Ralph Eugene Sackett.



August 23, 2021 at 03:07 PM

ES

“ We will always remember Ralph's ever present smile and gentle soul.
May loving memories bring you comfort and time bring you peace.
Eunice & Jeff Sherman

Eunice Sherman - August 23, 2021 at 01:34 PM

BM

Ralph was a gentleman, scholar and a very handsome man. Alicia you and Ralph made a beautiful couple. I wish I was able to visit Stonebridge one more time to see you again. Just know Alicia that Ray and I will always remember you both with Fond Memories and hope to meet again at that big fishing hole in the sky. Wishing you and your loving family comfort and the joy of having wonderful memories of a great man. Ray and Blanche Mino

Blanche Mino - August 25, 2021 at 02:58 PM

PM

As a renter for many years at Stonebridge, I had the pleasure of meeting and playing golf with Ralph many times over the years. His was a very nice gentleman and a pleasure to be around. My condolences to his family and friends. Peter McCarrick

Peter McCarrick - August 25, 2021 at 07:05 PM

DB

Alicia, Robb, Jill, Todd and Matt, Please accept my sincere sympathy. It was a great time living across the street on Garfield. I also remember you selling the back lot of the Oakland property to my brother. He built a home on it and lived there many years. Praying for you and your families. Donna Bugajski

donna christine Bugajski - August 26, 2021 at 10:17 PM

MH

I only heard this week about the death of Ralph and of Todd. We lose touch when we move about but I still have fond memories of times shared when my son was at the Univ of IL with Robb. Later, Todd and our daughter were classmates there. And, Alicia, being a Sig Mom with you going through our initiation blindfolded parade is an everlasting memory. With sincere sympathy for your great losses, Alicia, Robb and all the family.

Mary Sheila Harmon-Sasso - July 22, 2022 at 12:52 PM