

Dr. J. Philip Hey



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J. Philip Hey

Born: August 30, 1929

Died: May 15, 2020

BEECHER - Dr. J. Philip Hey, age 90 of Beecher, passed away of natural causes on Friday, May 15, 2020.

He was the first-born of Ruth (Holtzman) and Abram Hey, Sterling, Illinois. His birthdate was August 30, 1929. As he passed, he was surrounded by his wife, Ida and his four children, Laura, Tom, Dave, and Ken. The family dog, Teddy was with them. The group sang hymns "Amazing Grace," "In the Garden," and WWII popular song, "Now in the Hour." Each of us prayed individual, personal prayers, and together, the Lord's Prayer as we wished him Godspeed to Paradise. We listened to Michael Hey's recordings of Gershwin and Rachmanioff.

Phil is survived by his beloved wife of 33 years, Ida; his children, Laura (Kent) Hey/Hafner; Tom (Chris), Dave (Bea), and Ken (Marcia); daughter-in-law, Darlene (widow of Phil's eldest son John, deceased); Ida's children, Karl (Linda Meyer) Kazmirski, Lenette (Brad) Belush, Todd (Traci Howard) Kazmirski. Other survivors are his sisters, Janna (late El) Dean and Sue (late Ed) Cherry' brothers-in-law, Ray (Donna) Ross and Jack (Pat) Ross; sister-in-law, Sheila Ross.

Phil was an interested, concerned, and loving grandpa and great-grandpa to Nikki (Eric) Johnson and their twin boys, Shayden and Tevin; Troy Hey and his two sons, Terrin and Landin; Bianca Hey; Alby Chrisostomo, Michael Hey, Tracey Hey, Sawyer Hey, Forrest Hey, Mitchell Hey, Maya Hey, Andy (Cori) Belush and their two children, Grant and

Allie, Kloe (fiancé Gary Tackett) Belush, Justin (Tyler) Kazmirski and their family, Max Kazmirski, Zack, Karson, and Blake Pollauf. There are numerous beloved nieces and nephews, and great-nieces and great-nephews, including lawyer, Mike Dean and handyman, Patrick Ross.

Phil was educated in the Sterling, IL school system, where in high school he lettered in baseball, basketball, and track. He played drums in the S.H.S. band. He received his Bachelor's degree from North Central College in Naperville. He earned his Master's degree at Indiana University on an assistantship. He later earned his P.E.D from Indiana University, after submitting his thesis, "The Effects of Weight Training Upon the Accuracy of Basketball Shooting." He thanked his wife Mary (the mother of his children) for typing it. He taught American history and coached basketball, track, and cross country for 42 years. He coached basketball at Stevensville High School in Michigan from 1952-1957. In '56-'57, his Stevensville Cardinals just missed winning the state title. In '58-'59, he and his family went to Indiana where he earned his Master's degree. He next coached basketball and taught at Bloom Township H.S. in Chicago Heights. The fall of 1967 he coached and taught at University of Wisconsin and LaCrosse until '72. Moving back to Park Forrest, he finished his career with 20 years as athletic director and teacher at Rich East H.S. Not done yet, he accepted a job as girls' track and cross-country coach at

Merrillville H.S. in Indiana for several years. Wonderful experience.

Phil was an avid runner who completed 13 marathons and qualified for Boston 3 times. He also participated in triathlons and raced bicycles. In 1986 he married Ida Ross Kazmirski, and they enjoyed together their lives for 33 years. An accomplished athlete, he helped her become a distance bicyclist. They rode their bicycles around Lake Michigan, up Wisconsin, down Michigan, across Indiana, to their Calumet City Home. 1,447 miles of tent camping and bicycling for 30 days, 20 days of it in rain. He refused to put his bike away until he picked up 3 more miles so he could record 1,450 in his bike log. They went to Germany after winning air fare at the Virginia Wade Tennis competition and ran the mountains of the Romantic Road daily, returned to the U.S.A. and both had their best times ever at the Park Forrest 10. As a member of the Calumet Region Striders, he began conducting speed workouts weekly at either Merrillville's track or T.F. North Track, helping all of us get faster race times. As a member of Park Forest Pancake and Running Club, he was inducted into the Park Forest Sports Hall of Fame for his contributions as a race organizer.

To celebrate his 65th birthday, a group of 10 of us, including 16-year-old grandson, Justin and a retired

minister, 70, made it down and up the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. What a trip!

Ida mentioned the Appalachian Trail and Phil planned a trip. They did two 1-week hikes and both felt the presence of God in the great outdoors. Phil and Ida took a trip to New Orleans for the music and discovered great races which they ran for years. Love that jazz!

Phil joined the Indiana Senior Games advisory group and handled the track competition. He continued running, hiking, and biking into his 70s. Resulting from a gift of drums, on his 70th birthday, he returned to an old passion, took some brush up lessons, and joined a jazz class at Prairie State and drummed happily for the rest of his life. As snowbirds for 15 years, he played a lot of gigs in Arizona.

A religious man, he supported his church, Calvary U.P. church in Park Forest and was a longtime member of the Mission Commission there. For 10 years he helped prepare and serve the food at the local PADS shelter. He was a tutor at Jones Center in Chicago Heights and supported their community house.

He was a philanthropical man who did his best to support our American Indian brothers and sisters such as the Pine Ridge Reservation, respecting Billy Mills and his Running

Strong for American Indian Youth. Phil enjoyed the outdoors and nature, opera, jazz, drama, classical music, crossword puzzles, the Bulls, the Bears, Sox and Cubs, baked salmon, storytelling, and conversation with his combined family, books concerned with American political figures, and movements, the PBS 6 p.m. news hour, St. James Holy Bible, a good auto mechanic, the piano, dogs, and apple slices. Having been born into the Sterling/Dixon Hey Brothers Ice Cream Company, all ice cream, preferably chocolate, was a special joy.

He worked for several years building or renewing Habitat for Humanity Homes. He was honorable, industrious, compassionate, encouraging, steadfast and humble.

He was the finest Son, Dad, Grandpa, Great-Grandpa, Coach, Teacher, Musician, uncle, brother, brother-in-law, nephew, cousin, husband, "Boy Friend." Rest in Peace, Phil.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, no service will be held at this time. A celebration of life will be held at a later date. The family is deeply grateful to VITAS Hospice for their caring concern. If you wish to make a memorial donation, a charity of your choice is beautiful.

Be healthy. Be forgiving. Love one another as he did.