



Richard Joseph Wasko

March 4, 1928 - August 3, 2024

Richard Joseph Wasko, age 96, of Woodbury, passed away peacefully on August 3, 2024 surrounded by his loving wife of 66 years Jeré and four daughters.

Son of Gilbert and Mary Wasko (née Buzicky), Dick was born in St. Paul, MN on March 4, 1928. He attended Humboldt High School, St. Paul, MN, graduated in 1951 from St. John's University, Collegeville, MN, and served in the U.S. Army during the Korean Conflict. In 1969, Dick earned a master's degree from the University of St. Thomas, St Paul, MN.

In 1958, Dick married Jeré Gibbs and together they began their family and built a loving supportive home. Their four daughters were fortunate to witness a loving marriage that taught them about commitment, forgiveness, and appreciation of one another. Dick and Jeré modeled the values of living one's faith, service to others, and hospitality. They stressed the importance of education and the benefits of remaining physically active.

As a boy and young man, Dick played and excelled in football, basketball, and baseball. His time on the playing field often led to leadership roles as captain and eventually coaching. He earned an athletic scholarship to St. John's University where he continued to play football and baseball. While in college, he was state champion of singles handball. During the summer, he played

semi-pro baseball in Marshall, MN.

Dick worked a variety of interesting jobs. While living on the West Side of St. Paul, he worked in a butcher shop. After working during the day, he would jump on the streetcar to play the saxophone with a dance band late into the evening. He also worked at Hamm's brewery, served as a maître d' on the dining car train route between Chicago and Seattle, and sold real estate.

His teaching career began in Strasburg, ND, where he taught high school social studies. He moved to schools in Maple Lake, MN, and then West St. Paul, MN, before establishing himself at Johnson High School in St. Paul, MN. During his long tenure, he coached many of the Johnson "Govies" teams including cross country, football, basketball, and his most loved baseball.

Following his retirement from the classroom in 1988, Dick enjoyed international and domestic travel with his wife and often their friends. They also found great pleasure in taking road trips to visit friends and relatives across the US. Dick's deep interest in history often took them off a direct route to stop at historic sites and landmarks. He passed on his love of travel and history to his daughters and their families.

In later years, Dick stayed active playing golf and bridge, and volunteering as an AARP tax consultant for more than 35 years. For many decades, Dick, Jeré, his daughters and eventually grandchildren returned to Breezy Point for a week or two to enjoy "lake life." As a member of St. Pascal parish for over 62 years, Dick was active in a number of roles: youth leader, eucharistic minister, hospitality server, and greeter.

Dick is preceded in death by his parents, Gilbert and Mary Wasko; his brothers Gilbert, Meldon, Robert; and sisters Adeline Peterson, Helen Edmund, Dolores Glansman.

He is survived by his loving wife of 66 years, Geraldine "Jeré"; his four daughters Susan (Lorenzo) Salinas, Beth (Len) Schweich, Jane (Chad) Linn-Weisbrod, Katie (Dennis) Williams; 10 grandchildren Billy (Kelsey) Salinas, Leslie (Phil) Salinas, Mary Schweich, Lauren (Matt) Kiefer, Jack (Meg) Schweich, Emily (Kayle) Lewellen, Patrick (Emma) Linn, Jake (Maggie) Williams, Anna (Dave Brown) Williams, Ben Williams, and 10 great grandchildren - Tori, Margot, Croix, Jayce, Cecil, Teyah, Roman, Tyson, Stella, and Felix.

We wish to express our deep gratitude to the staff at Regions Hospital, St. Therese Long Term Care, and HealthPartners Hospice for their compassion and expert care.

Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:30am, Monday, August 12, 2024, at St Pascal Baylon Catholic Church, 1757 Conway St., St. Paul, MN, 55106. Visitation is one hour prior at the church. Private interment at Calvary Cemetery in St. Paul, MN.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to St. John's University/ College of St. Benedict for student scholarships or to St. Pascal Baylon Church.

Tribute Wall

KK

“ I saw this very late in March 2025. Richard was my phy ed coach in Strasburg North Dakota in 1955-56. He started the GAA, Girls Athletic Club because there were no opportunities for girls to play sports at that time. He was a good man - enthusiastic and full of good energy. My sympathy. Fritzie Kraft. S. Katherine Kraft. I enjoyed meeting Geri years ago. God bless!

Katherine Kraft - March 30, 2025 at 12:52 PM

SF

“ Mr. Wasko was my sophomore baseball coach at Johnson in the spring of 1966. He was a great coach and always so good to me. Coach Wasko was a huge influence on so many of us and he gave me a big boost toward playing college baseball. I send hugs and prayers to his family.

scott Frantzen - August 09, 2024 at 02:33 PM

SF

Scott Frantzen, Johnson class 1968

scott Frantzen - August 09, 2024 at 02:36 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Richard Joseph Wasko.



August 09, 2024 at 11:17 AM