



Ferdynand Filipiak

May 27, 1918 - May 19, 2014

Ferdynand “Fred” Filipiak, 95, of the Hungry Hill section of Springfield, died on Monday, May 19, 2014 at Baystate Medical Center. Born on May 27, 1918, son of the late Leon and Catherine (Skowyra) Filipiak, he was educated in the Chicopee public schools and was a communicant of Holy Mother of the Rosary National Church. In 1936, Fred joined the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), an initiative by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to create jobs for American men who could not find work during the depression. A US Army veteran of World War II, he served from 1938 to 1945 with the 350th Replacement Co., 67th Replacement Battalion, Infantry Division, and participated in the Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes and Central European Campaigns. He held the rank of Sergeant and was stationed in Panama and Hawaii, where he played baseball in the Panamanian Pacific and Atlantic League. Fred played in the championship series in both Panama and Hawaii. After the war, he continued playing baseball in Chicopee with the Dodgers, Colonels and the Sandy Hill Eagles. In 1935, he played baseball with the Chicopee Braves, a little league team 14-16 years of age, that won the league championship and earned a trip to New York to see the Yankees and Red Sox play. In order to win that trip to New York, the Braves had to beat some first rate pitchers- Vic Raschi and Bunny Taliaferro. Raschi went on to be one of the top pitchers for the Yankees in the late 1940s and early 1950s, forming (with Allie Reynolds and Eddie Lopat) the “Big Three” of the Yankees’ pitching staff. Taliaferro played on the Post 21 national runner-up team in

1932 and was on its way again in 1934 until a racial incident occurred on the eve of the eastern sectional tournament in Gastonia, NC. when the Springfield kids were told that their African-American teammate, Bunny Taliaferro, would not be able to play or stay with them, they voted to pull out of the tournament . A memorial at Forest Park in Springfield reminds the city of that team's landmark stand for civil rights. Prior to his retirement in 1980, Fred worked for thirty-six years at the former Uniroyal Co. in Chicopee. For many years he and his wife enjoyed polka dancing. An avid displayer of outdoor Christmas decorations, Fred was written about in the Springfield newspapers many times, and through the years won several awards for his Christmas displays. Fred was predeceased by his beloved wife of sixty-eight years, Stella (Twardus) Filipiak, and also by his son, Fred, Jr. He is survived by three sons, Robert of Chicopee, Ronald of Wethersfield, CT and Richard of West Springfield, and his daughter, Deborah McGavin of Littleton, MA; seven grandchildren; and his cousin, Stacia Filipiak Falkowski. He was predeceased by his brothers, Stanley, Vincent and Kazimer Filipiak. Funeral services for Fred will be held Saturday at 9 AM from Kozikowski Funeral Home, 565 Front St., Chicopee, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 10 AM in Holy Mother of the Rosary Church. Burial with military honors will follow in the parish cemetery. Calling hours are Friday from 4-7 PM. Memorial contributions may be made to Holy Mother of the Rosary National Church, 26 Bell St., Chicopee.

Cemetery Details

Holy Mother of the Rosary Cemetery

Rzasa Drive
Chicopee, MA

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 23. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Kozikowski Funeral Home
565 Front Street
Chicopee, MA 01013
(413) 592-9256
kozikowskifh@gmail.com

Service

MAY 24. 10:00 AM (ET)

Holy Mother of the Rosary National Catholic Church
20 Bell St.
Chicopee, MA