



Mr. Sylvester Polk

August 27, 1927 - January 11, 2024

Sylvester "Swifty" Polk was born on August 27, 1927 to Johnnie {Bland} Polk in Milwaukee, WI. Sylvester accepted Christ at a young age and was united with Blessed Virgin of Pompeii Church.

At the age of 18, Sylvester was drafted to the United States Army where he served for 1 year before receiving his formal education at Maryland State University Eastern Shore in Princess Anne, Maryland.

Syl managed to find a place for himself in the Army as a star athlete. Here he received the All Service title for football and basketball. During Syl's time at Maryland State Eastern Shore, he excelled in Football. He was All American in 1948, 1949, and 1950. He led the nation in scoring in 1949. Sports weren't the only good thing that came out of Maryland. It is here where Syl met Nannie Amelia Merchant who would go on to be his wife for 65 years.

Sylvester and Nannie were united in holy matrimony in 1950 in Washington, DC. Their union was blessed with three children. Syl was employed by Milwaukee

County and spent most of his tenure there as Park Recreation Supervisor. He also served as Assistant Stadium Manager at Milwaukee County stadium for many years.

Syl enjoyed socializing with friends and his love of sports. He continued to play softball over the years and was on the senior citizen softball team when they went on to the Olympic games. Syl was also a very proud member of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity.

Syl was preceded in death by his brother James Polk; sisters, Idella Thomas and Emma Robertson; wife, Nannie {Merchant} Polk. Syl leaves to cherish his memory: son, William {Regina} Polk; daughter, Joyce Polk; son, George {Victoria} Polk; five grandchildren, Adrian Polk, Theodore {Jillian} Clarke; Stefanie Polk; Chase {Taryn} Polk and Jordan {Caleb} Calhoun; eight great-grandchildren; and a host of other relatives and dear friends.

Cemetery Details

Wisconsin Memorial Park

13235 W. Capitol Dr.
Brookfield, WI

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 26. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Wisconsin Memorial Park Chapel of the Chimes
13235 W. Capitol Dr.
Milwaukee, WI

Funeral Service

JAN 26. 2:00 PM (CT)

Wisconsin Memorial Park "Chapel of Chimes
13235 W. Capitol Dr.
Milwaukee, WI

Tribute Wall

KV

“ I worked with Syl at Burlington Coat Factory, he was Security as I was the Front End Manager there. I was so saddened to read his obituary as I googled him, and wanted to call to see how he was doing. He was the same age as my 96 year old mother is. We had so many nice conversations, and I enjoyed talking to him, and working with him. 😞 I had a vendor Business in Racine and he came to one of the Jazz events that I was doing at that time at the Racine Zoo's Animal Crackers. We spoke a few times over the years, and I was always going to stop at his bar hangout. Saw him a few times at the Italian Community center at their music events also. He was a GREAT MAN, and I know you all miss him. Once again, my sincere condolences to all of you, I am sure that you all have many great memories of him to give you peace and comfort. Prayers!

Kathy V. - December 23, 2024 at 07:20 AM

RB

“ Our love, thoughts, and prayers go out to the Family of Mr. Sylvester Polk. I have known Mr. and Mrs. Polk since we became their neighbors in the mid 1980's. He and Mrs. Polk welcomed us into the neighborhood with open and loving arms. Mr. Polk would always lend a helping hand whenever we needed him. He definitely would "tag-team" with my husband whenever there was snow to be shoveled/blown. Of course, while everyone else was struggling with shovels and smaller blowers, Mr. Polk would come barreling through with his "industrial-sized" snow blower complete with an encased shield and headlight like he was a city worker LOL! He was always kind and never hesitated to speak and wave whenever he saw you. He knew so many people and had so many connections. He was very well-respected and will be truly missed.

Roz Britton - January 30, 2024 at 04:35 PM

TD

“ My condolences to the Polk family as you mourn but also celebrate his life and times. He was such a good friend and mentor and I will always miss that smile and encouraging dialog.
Now that he becomes an ancestor every time we speak his name so he lives on in our hearts, minds, memory and spirits.
May God be with you all and bring you comfort and love!
Tyrone P Dumas

Tyrone P Dumas - January 28, 2024 at 07:11 PM

DP

“ Played ball with syl for many years one of the finest gentlemen I met on the field he was the best

Dick Peyton - January 21, 2024 at 09:08 AM

DS

SYL WAS A GREAT SOFTBALL MANAGER. HE WAS ALSO WAS A CLASS PERSON. I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER HIM. DAVE SADOWSKI

DAVE SADOWSKI - January 21, 2024 at 01:43 PM

TH

Mr. Polk was my chaperone during my advancement to the national semi-finals of the Pepsi Hot-Shot basketball competition when I was 14/15 years old. From the Milwaukee Arena, to Market Square Arena to Portland, OR, Mr. Polk traveled with me and my father as we represented the Milwaukee Bucks in this national basketball shooting contest. What an amazing nice, caring man. Myself, and my father, thought the world of him. RIP Mr. Polk, I still thank you 46 years later, god bless. Tom Hecker

Tom Hecker - January 24, 2024 at 03:51 PM

BM

Peace and Blessings be upon you. Mr. Sylvester "Swiftly" Polk was the greatest of all the MSC/UMES Hawk football legends. He was a dear friend and I will miss him greatly. He deserves to be in the College Football Hall of Fame and I will continue to nominate him until he gets in or I will die trying. Further, we will continue to fight to return Hawk football to UMES on behalf of him, his "main man" John Mitchell or other Hawk legends of the 40's and 50's until we "make it happen". Peace be unto you. Dr. Bryant C. Mitchell, Chairman of Hawks for Football.

Bryant Charles Mitchell - January 26, 2024 at 10:38 AM

MD

Words cannot describe how much Sylvester meant to me, especially during my security years for Midwest Sportsservice. I wasn't sure what happened to our friendship during my front-office years with the Milwaukee Brewers. But, I talked with him for the first time in years several years ago. All he would say, I'm 93 years old!" I hope I'll be around that long. Slyvester was one in a million and I will always be grateful to Slyvester, Jack Hutchinson, Mike Zenz, and John Rutley. If you were part of our group during the 70s and early 80s doing security at SummerFest, State Fair, and County Stadium, you would know how special these guys were. These guys recruited me from selling popcorn and peanuts because they saw something in me and a bunch of other guys. Good bless my man. Mike

Michael Downs - June 08, 2024 at 02:44 AM