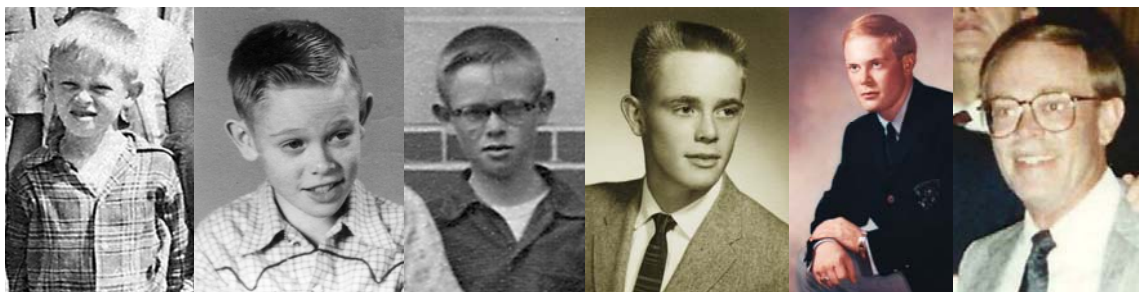


Paul Close



1st Grade

5th Grade

Patrol Boy

HS Graduation

BSU Grad
Painting

30th HS Reunion

Cambridge City - Paul David "Charlie" Close Jr., 57, died Saturday, April 1, 2000, in Lake Station. He was born September 30, 1942, in Cambridge City, to Helen L. and Paul David

Close.

He was a high school teacher and coach. He had taught at Edison High School for the past 35 years and coached basketball, cross country, track and wrestling. He earned a bachelor's degree from Ball State University and master's degree from Indiana University. He was a member of Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity and Indiana State Teachers Association. He was an avid golfer and coached Little League for many years.

Survivors include his wife of 35 years, Julienne; three sons, Mark David of Scottsdale, AZ,

Jason Matthew of Myrtle Beach, SC, and Chad Houston of Mesa, AZ; his mother, Helen L. Close of Cambridge City; two sisters, Karen R. Curle of Cambridge, MD, and Karla J. Southerland of Cambridge City; one brother, Timothy A. Close of Cambridge City; and four grandsons. He was preceded in death by his father and a nephew.

A memorial mass was Saturday, April 8, at St. Francis Xavier Church, Lake Station, with Rev. Robert B. Evers officiating. Cremation was at Calvary Crematory.

Memorials may be made to the Paul David Close Scholarship Fund, c/o Edison Senior High School, 3304 Parkside Av., Lake Station, IN 46405.

Rees Funeral Home, Olson Chapel, Lake Station was in charge of arrangements.

The Sad End of a Legacy at Lake Station

by Jeff Carroll/Sports Writer

This article was taken from the Times Northwest Indiana

I never met Charlie Close in this life, although when my tee time is called at that great golf course in the sky, I'll request he be part of my foursome.

Close coached several sports at Lake Station for more than two decades, including varsity boys and girls cross country, eighth grade basketball and junior high track.

Three weeks ago; he suffered a heart attack and a stroke and was hospitalized.

His life of loyalty ended last Saturday, at the age of 57.

Who was Charlie Close? I could rip through a list of accomplishments. During the '90s, he planted two runners in the state finals, Mike Vega and Eric Woynarowski. Bound but never broken by his small school limitations, Close often fielded cross country teams full of football players. They'd shake out the Saturday soreness and hit the ground running.

But there is no better testament than a resume written by friends.

"He loved the game of golf," recalled former Eagles football coach Mike Hepp, a close friend. "He didn't love it, he was addicted to it and we were golfing buddies. That's how we really got to be friends is just going out and playing golf. We both kind of learned together, and that's one of the things he lived for during the summer time. We went down to Biloxi, MS, a group of us guys from school and other schools for about 18 straight years, and this was the first year he missed it." For 14 straight days, Hepp visited Close's hospital room. Then he left for the annual rite of spring.

"We went down there because of him, because he wanted us to go," Hepp said. "Our trip down there was dedicated to him. Every swing we took and every beer we drank was dedicated to him. We had put a pact together that if anything ever happened, us guys would go on with the vacations. We came back on Sunday morning. He passed away Saturday night. He hung on to

let us finish the vacation. I really believe he knew deep down inside. He didn't want to spoil it for us."

Close was a native of Cambridge City, and taught for a year in Michigan City. His wife, Julie, was from Lake Station, and that is where the pair settled.

"He cared a great deal about the school," said athletic director Kevin Johnson. "He's really gonna be missed, not only from a coaching standpoint, but he was a friend of mine too. He was a friend to a lot of people there, and a lot of people had deep feelings about him."

"It's sad and it's sad that it has to be brought up in this way," Hepp said. "The man had to die in order for other people to take notice. I think nowadays that's lost, in the

coaches that coach the minor sports or the junior high sports. He was coaching just as long as Don Howell was its headline for Don Howell, which he deserved. But there is a guy like Charlie who just coached minor sports and junior high sports for such a long time. And I think people lose the fact that they're just as dedicated as bigtime coaches."

It's nice to be a big-time coach, but it's more imperative to be a big-time human being. Don Howell was. So was Charlie Close.

And although it's not quite a banner across the top of the page here's his hard-earned headline.