

Edward Manfred “Bud” Erickson

March 12, 1923 – August 29, 2017

Edward Manfred “Bud” Erickson was born to Swedish-American immigrant parents in Dunkirk, New York. He participated in football, basketball, track and volleyball, but his high school did not have a baseball team which was his favorite sport. After graduating from high school in 1941, he was recruited to play freshman football at Duke University, but instead played baseball and basketball.

Expecting to be drafted, he transferred to Syracuse University in 1942 to be closer to his parents. When World War II broke out he enlisted in the Army Air Corp. Diagnosed with color blindness he was not allowed to pursue pilot training, so he opted for meteorology which included studies at Hamilton College in Hamilton, New York. While there he played on the basketball team.

Because there were too many enlistees in meteorology, Bud transferred to a new specialty: weather observation. He was posted in Texas and Oklahoma. While in Illinois at Canute Field, he played on a National championship basketball team.

He was discharged from the military and enrolled at Michigan State University in 1946 to pursue a career in broadcast journalism. He resumed playing college baseball in 1947 and 1948, captaining the 1948 team.

After graduating in 1948 from Michigan State, Bud served as an assistant in the MSU sports information department under Fred Stabley.

One of Bud's mentors, Nick Kerbaway, took a position with the Detroit Lions and was instrumental in arranging for Bud to join Van Patrick on the Detroit Tigers baseball broadcasts in 1952. He married Florence "Micke" McCluskie in September 1952 at the First Presbyterian Church, Northville, Michigan.

Bud joined the Detroit Lions in 1952 as Public Relations Director. The team won the NFL championship in 1952, 1953, and 1957 and he remained with them until 1965, having become Assistant General Manager in 1960.

With a recommendation from then NFL commissioner Pete Rozelle, Bud was selected as Assistant to the President of the newly established Atlanta Falcons in 1965. His responsibilities were wide-ranging including hiring coaches and administrators as well as training camp site selection, uniforms, ticket sales and other promotions.



In 1968 he was awarded the WSB Radio "Beaver Award" for meritorious commitment to the community of Atlanta. He chaired the Atlanta chapter of the Leukemia Society of America while living and working in the city.

In 1970 tour player Gloria Armstrong recruited Bud to become Executive Director of the Ladies Professional Golf Association, LPGA. He held that position for 5 years adding new events to the tour and tripling the amount of tournament purses. Foreign tournaments stops were added in Japan, England, and Australia.

In 1976 he served as Executive Director of the Atlanta Golf classic for 2 years and then was recruited by Oakland Hills to serve as Tournament Director for the 1979 PGA championship. He continued at Oakland Hills for the 1981 Senior Open, 1985 US Open, and the 1991 Senior Open. At the same time, he also served as executive Director of the Golf Association of Michigan (GAM).

After retirement he arranged golf excursions to Scotland and Ireland for large groups which gave him great enjoyment. He continued to play golf recreationally whenever possible, including an annual trip to Hilton Head Island every March. He played golf well into his nineties.

Bud remained an ardent Michigan state fan and supporter throughout his life and attended many of the football games as a member of the Varsity Club. He was also an enthusiastic Spartan basketball fan.

He was an active member of First Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Michigan, and served as an usher for many years. He also helped with the church's rummage sales as a cashier. He served on the Worship and Music committee and participated in the Christmas Hand-in-Hand Walking tour, often playing a costumed role such as a Roman soldier or Wiseman.

Bud was inducted into the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame, Jamestown, NY, in 2001.

He is survived by his wife, Micke, his daughter Linda Erickson of Birmingham, Michigan, his son Jon Erickson of Atlanta, Georgia (his wife Kathy), his granddaughter Katie Erickson Zeek of Atlanta, Georgia (her husband Ryan), and his grandson, 2nd Lieutenant Brian Erickson, USMC (his wife Ciara).

Memorial tributes to the First Presbyterian Church, 1669 W. Maple, Birmingham, MI
OR: Michigan State Baseball 223 Kalamazoo Street East Lansing, MI 48824