



Richard Frank Smrz

Class of 1957

Richard Frank Smrz, 87, passed away on March 4, 2025, at Washington Hospital Center after a short illness. He was the husband of the late Nancy Bergman Smrz, with whom he shared 49 years of marriage. He is survived by his son, Andrew Smrz, and his sister Dorothy Kerst of Everett, Washington. Richard was born on February 12, 1938, in Columbus, Nebraska to Frank and Libby Smrz, both Czech immigrants. The family moved to Omaha when he was a young boy. He attended the Nebraska School for the Deaf, graduating in 1957. He attended Gallaudet College (now University), graduating in 1962. He met Nancy at Gallaudet, and they married in 1965. He pursued a career in education, working at the Colorado School for the Deaf and then the West Virginia School for the Deaf before being hired at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf on the campus of Gallaudet as a physical education teacher, retiring after 25 years. A longtime resident of Bowie, Maryland, he was a parishioner of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Deaf Church in Landover Hills since the late 1970s. He was an active member of the Deaf community, involved with various alumni and senior associations. Sports was his most important personal and social interest. He was a student-athlete as a young man and was a coach and athletic director for various Deaf volunteer and intramural sports teams throughout his life, even becoming a referee for local Bowie youth teams in his retirement years. At various times throughout his life, he was a traveler both with his family and on his own, traveling to much of the United States, to Mexico, and once to the Czech Republic solo in the early 1990s to meet for the first time his distant relatives.