

George J. Guida, age 93, of San Francisco, CA, passed away quietly on September 7, 2015 among loved ones and friends. He was born to the late Louis Guida and Anna Guida (nee LaGreca) in Philadelphia, PA.

George grew up in South Philadelphia and attended Southeast Catholic High School where he excelled in sports, especially running. He was a good student and finished high school at age 16. While in high school, George received a track scholarship to attend Villanova University under the guidance of Villanova's legendary track coach Jumbo Elliott.

George entered Villanova as a freshman in 1942. Soon afterwards WWII broke out and George left college to enter the US Navy where he proudly served his country from November 1943 until June 1946. He later returned to his studies and his track career at Villanova University where he graduated President and Valedictorian of his Class of 1949.

During his college career, George was an outstanding track star having achieved many accomplishments, including his selection to the 1947 Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), and Men's All-American Indoor Track and Field Team for the 600 yard run. George also ran for the Philadelphia Athletic Club (PAC).

George's achievements in track included **Intercollegiate Association of Amateur Athletes of America (IC4A)** Indoor 600 yard champion, IC4A outdoor 440 yard champion, and World Indoor Record 500 yards at the New York AC Games (known today as the Millrose Games). He also held many local and national records in his day, making him the fastest runner in Philadelphia at that time.

But the highlight of George's track career was the **1948 Summer Olympic Games** in London where he finished 6th in the 400 meters with a time of 50.2. While in Europe, he and fellow Villanova teammate Browning Ross befriended Irish quarter miler Jimmy Reardon. Their friendship with Reardon led track coach Jumbo Elliott to offer him a scholarship, thus starting the Irish Pipeline of runners at Villanova. Besides competing in track for Villanova, George was also a standout flanker on the Wildcat football team. A 1999 Villanova Athletic Hall of Fame inductee, George is considered by many to be the first great Villanova track athlete. His shoes are retired and his name appears on the famous field above the track.

In the early 1950's, George moved to San Francisco, California to work for Baumfolders Corporation, as a Sales Representative. He made many loyal business friends and was recognized as a great salesman among his peers. George worked for Baumfolders until he retired in the 1990's.

Most importantly, George was truly a humble individual, never wanting attention or the limelight for his running accomplishments. Throughout his life he strived to live as a Christian, forever giving of himself to others' needs rather than his own. Nicknamed "Saint George" by those who knew him, he was unselfish, modest, honest, and a true

gentlemen. George would give away anything he had to make others happy, expecting nothing in return. He will forever be remembered for his caring acts of kindness and relentless generosity.

George is predeceased by his sisters and brothers, Catherine Fisher (nee Guida), Barbara Robinson (nee Guida), Anthony Guida, Angelo Guida, James Guida, Louis Guida, and Reynold Guida; and longtime good friend, Sari Biro.

He is survived by a large family of 24 loving nieces and nephews as well as many caring and wonderful people that have known and loved him for many years, including longtime friend Maria Watts of San Francisco and her daughter Fiora.

The family of George Guida expresses their thanks to the many people at Central Gardens and especially to Maria Watts who truly loved and looked after George. We will forever be grateful.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend his visitation on Thursday, September 17, from 8 A.M. to 9:30 A.M. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10am at St. Peter's Church, located at 43 W. Maple Ave, Merchantville, NJ 08109. George will be laid to rest at Holy Cross Cemetery in Yeadon, PA. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in George's memory to any Catholic Charity or other charity of your choice. Please feel free to post photos, share a memory, or send an online condolence to the family.

Respectfully,

Karen Lamb
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