



Tribute to a Champion

VERN DAHLQUIST 1929 - 2006

He wasn't the king of any sport. But I don't doubt he could have been, had he put his mind to it. But make no mistake--he was a champion.

He was a sailor, an air force officer and, yes, very much a gentleman. Yet Vern's true claim to fame, from my point of view, was his championing on behalf of others.

Kind people are generous of spirit and often give away smiles all day long. Vern did, too. More than that, he believed in the goodness of everyone and had a way of bringing it out in others.

It began with his faith. It manifested within his family. A nicer bunch I don't think you could meet. And because of them, he counted himself among the most fortunate among us. His champion qualities featured a life-long gratitude for life.

Vern was a community servant. His service took many forms. He served his country with honor. He served his community through Kiwanis and he served other families through Child & Family Services. He found dignity in everyone and humility in himself.

Vern was a champion in my eyes and always will be. I am proud to have learned from him and proud to count him as one of my most precious mentors. He had a soft heart, but could also make the tough decisions and stand his ground. I admired him.

It's true, not all champions come to us through sports. While he loved the University of Michigan Wolverines, he cheered on his fellow man even more. Vern was a teacher by shining example. He had the courage to do the important, do it right and do it well.

He combined humor with integrity and valor, but never sought attention for its own sake. Despite a life replete with accomplishments, he was always humble, friendly and caring.

What more could you ever ask of a champion?

Danny Peterson

Chief Executive Officer
Child & Family Services of the Upper Peninsula, Inc.

Please consider making a tax-deductible gift to the Vern Dahlquist Children's Leadership Fund that his work may continue. Thank you.