



## **Charles P. Saad** - *Sports and Athletics*

This lifelong Wheeling resident reached the heights of his chosen profession of athletic training. Born June 14, 1925, to parents Thomas and Malenia Khoury Saad, he attended grade school at St. Alphonsus and was a 1943 graduate of Central Catholic High School. He traveled the country with major and minor league baseball teams, and an NBA professional basketball league team plus major college athletic programs during a 30-year career that lasted from 1951 to 1981.

Following his graduation from high school, Saad took summer chemistry classes at Duquesne University before serving a short stint with the Medical Corp in the U.S. Army during World War II. He then attended West Virginia University where he became an assistant trainer for all sports under state Hall of Famer A. C. (Whitey) Gwynne through 1951. During the next 15 years, he worked both in minor league baseball and as an all-sports trainer on major college campuses. He was an assistant trainer for the Class A Columbia, South Carolina, Gems and the Class AA Memphis, Tennessee, Chicks. He became Head Trainer from 1959-67 for the Class AAA Indianapolis, Indiana, Indians. During the off-season, he worked all sports at WVU, the University of South Carolina, and the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. His minor league career included stints with teams that won five league championships.

In 1965, he started a five-year tenure with the Los Angeles Lakers of the National Basketball Association, which was coached by former WVU coach Fred Schaus. Saad served as the Lakers trainer for their Eastern schedule and also doubled as an equipment manager and ticket handler when the team left the West Coast for games. He later declined a Lakers offer to become Head Trainer for the entire country and concentrated on baseball, his favorite sport.

From 1967-78, he reached major league baseball by becoming Head Trainer for the Chicago White Sox. He worked with manager Chuck Tanner for four years, leading to a lifelong friendship with the future Pittsburgh Pirates manager. While in the Steel City, Tanner would visit Saad in Wheeling. From 1979-81, Saad worked as Head Trainer of the Oakland A's as well as the California Angels during their spring training camps before retiring. He was a proud member of the Major League Alumni Association. Saad is believed to be the only West Virginian to have been employed both by professional sports teams in the major leagues and the National Basketball Association.

Returning home to Wheeling, Saad continued a 33-year working relationship with the YMCA. He made numerous friendships with professional athletes, club owners, and coaches, which made him popular with local sports fans. Some of those associations included Tanner, Schaus, Jerry West, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Elgin Baylor, Gene Autry, Tom Hawkins, Eddie Stankey, Bob Lemon, Luke Appling, and Bobby Bonds.

Saad passed away on Nov. 21, 2014, at his home in center Wheeling. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother, Thomas J. Saad, and his sister, Agnes M. Saad. He was a member, parishioner, supporter, and altar server for St. Alphonsus Catholic Church for more than 30 years.