



SR0369

LRB098 12452 MST 46853 r

1

SENATE RESOLUTION

2

WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of Harold "Pete" Vonachen of Peoria, who died on June 10, 2013; and

3

4

5

WHEREAS, Harold Vonachen graduated from Spalding Institute and then Bradley University in 1949; he served in the U.S. Navy from 1943-1946; he married Donna Hurst on May 11, 1957; and

6

7

8

WHEREAS, Harold Vonachen was a longtime Peoria entrepreneur and the person responsible for making minor league baseball stick in the city; he purchased the Peoria Suns in 1983, and in 1985 it was renamed the Chiefs and became an affiliation of the Chicago Cubs; throughout the years, the team has been affiliated with both the Cubs and the St. Louis Cardinals; the team set Midwest League attendance records in 1985, 1988, and 1989; he eventually sold the team, but in 1994 led a group to re-purchase it; the ballpark where the Chiefs played was renamed in his honor as Pete Vonachen Stadium and housed the team until they moved to their new downtown stadium, Dozer Park in 2002; and

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

WHEREAS, Before Harold Vonachen made his mark in minor league baseball, his early ventures were in the restaurant field; he began with a part-time job running Field House

21

22

1 concessions at Bradley University and at the same time worked  
2 at Murphy's restaurant; in 1955, he opened his own restaurant,  
3 Vonachen's Junction, a place known for its distinctive train  
4 car dining room; and

5 WHEREAS, In 1970, after 15 years of running a successful  
6 restaurant, Harold Vonachen switched careers and became  
7 president of Peoria Blacktop Inc.; he ran his construction  
8 business until making another career move into the sports  
9 world; and

10 WHEREAS, Harold Vonachen was named Midwest League  
11 Executive of the Year and The Sporting News Class A Pro  
12 Baseball Minor League Executive of the Year; he served on the  
13 Peoria Park Board for 6 years, as a member of Bradley's board  
14 of trustees, and as a member of the City Liquor Commission; he  
15 was a past director of the Peoria Area Chamber of commerce and  
16 the Peoria Rotary Club and was a member of OSF Saint Francis  
17 Medical Center's advisory board; he is an inductee of the  
18 Greater Peoria Sports Hall of Fame; and

19 WHEREAS, Harold Vonachen was preceded in death by his wife,  
20 Donna; and

21 WHEREAS, Harold Vonachen is survived by his children, Mary  
22 Michael "Mikie" Shadid, Harold "Rocky" III, Gregory, Daniel,

1 and Mark; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL  
3 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
4 Harold Vonachen, and extend our sincere condolences to his  
5 family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it  
6 further

7 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
8 presented to the family of Harold Vonachen as an expression of  
9 our deepest sympathy.