



## Clyde B. Emrich

April 6, 1931 - November 10, 2021

Clyde B. Emrich, 90, passed away on November 10, 2021, in Deerfield, IL. He was born April 6, 1931, in Chicago and had been living in Lake Bluff, IL for the past twenty-seven years. As a young man Clyde found a passion for weightlifting that would take him across the world including the 1952 Olympics. He would later go on to break two World Records and compete at an elite international level. Clyde would give two years of his life to serve his country in the United States Army, and as an athlete he toured the world on goodwill missions for the military. Upon returning from the military, he would continue his passion for weightlifting in the evenings at the Irving Park YMCA. During the days he worked for the Hartford Insurance Company as a claims adjuster. It was at the YMCA that Clyde would meet fate after working with several Chicago Bears football players. In 1963 he had his first official contact with the Bears organization. The rest became a dream come true when George Halas hired him in 1971 to be the team's first strength coach. Clyde became the longest tenured staffer for the Chicago Bears. He worked for the team for 50 years until his passing. During that time, he was given the nickname "Legend" and after getting to know him, you realized the name fit. Clyde enjoyed photography, astronomy, shooting, and reading about history. Clyde truly cared about his family and friends and will be missed by all who knew him. He shared his passion for weightlifting with anyone who would ask. His sons, and now his grandchildren continue to carry that torch forward. Always willing to help anyone at the drop of a hat if they asked for training advice. He

was a humble man that touched so many lives in this world to which the extent shall be spoken about for generations.

Surviving are his two children, Jon (Marnie) and Ken (Lisa) Emrich; four grandchildren, Maddie, Brett, Bryan, and Lauren; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his four sisters, Mary, Marguerite, Irene, Patricia, Celeste, and brother Richard.

Visitation will be 3:00 PM to 8:00 PM on Monday, November 15, at Burnett-Dane Funeral Home, 120 W. Park Ave. (Rte. 176 one block west of Milwaukee Ave.) Libertyville, IL. Funeral service, 11:00 AM on Tuesday at St. Joseph Church, 121 E. Maple Drive, Libertyville, IL. Private interment at Maryhill Cemetery in Niles. Memorial donations may be made to Team USA Weightlifting at [www.teamusa.org](http://www.teamusa.org) For info: (847)362-3009 or please share a memory or leave a condolence at [www.burnettdane.com](http://www.burnettdane.com).

<https://www.chicagobears.com/news/bears-lose-the-legend-with-passing-of-clayde-emrich>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

NOV **15**. 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Burnett-Dane Funeral Home  
120 West Park Avenue  
Libertyville, IL 60048  
(847) 362-3009

## Funeral Mass

NOV **16**. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Joseph Catholic Church  
121 E. Maple Avenue  
Libertyville, IL 60048

# Tribute Wall

LH

“ *My sincerest condolences on the loss of Clyde. We spent memorable times with him, he was such a motivating person. His words spoken in his wonderful accent ring in my head. He was instrumental to the health and success of the players, both physically and mentally, greatly contributing to the success of the 80's Chicago Bears. I am grateful to have known him.*  
*Lisa Hilgenberg*

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**Lisa Hilgenberg** - November 29, 2021 at 01:44 PM

RM

*I was a fan & was in the audience the first time he did over 400 lbs in the C&J. They brought the scale in front of the audience and all the men surrounded him while he stripped & his weight was checked. It was a world record at the time. I lifted in many of the same events in the 148 3/4 class he was with Irving Park YMCA I lifted for the Division St Y. RIP*

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**Ray Mitchell** - January 06, 2025 at 03:47 PM

SC

“ *Soup Campbell purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Clyde B. Emrich.*



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**Soup Campbell** - November 15, 2021 at 01:28 PM

TT

“ *Tim LeFevour & the Soldier Field Team purchased the Ocean Breeze Spray for the family of Clyde B. Emrich.*



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**Tim LeFevour & the Soldier Field Team** - November 15, 2021  
at 09:23 AM



“ *Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Clyde B. Emrich.*



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November 14, 2021 at 10:20 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Clyde B. Emrich.*



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November 14, 2021 at 09:30 PM

TD

“ *Tom &Mimi Dillon purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of Clyde B. Emrich.*



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**Tom &Mimi Dillon** - November 14, 2021 at 12:38 PM



“ *Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Clyde B. Emrich.*



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November 13, 2021 at 07:25 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Clyde B. Emrich.*



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November 13, 2021 at 09:01 AM



“ *Jon and Ken: My thoughts and prayers are with you both. As you know I shared an office and worked side by side with your Dad for twenty five years. Your father was a man of honor and he told me many times how proud he was of you both. Clyde, You have earned your internal rest and I know you are now in Your Creators care. June, Jon and Ken my best wishes to all of you and too the Emrich family. Fred Caito and Family*

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**Fred Caito** - November 12, 2021 at 01:20 PM

JE

“ To My Two wonderful Sons, Jon & Ken:

*This is a memory going back when you were both young. Remember the car trips; your Dad never wanted to fly anywhere, so we would take these car trips. Clyde was right, the car trips are far more enjoyable than flying somewhere. We had a Siberian Husky his name was Yukon, and we never left him behind. We traveled by train once, (before Yukon) "The Denver Zepher", that was great. We visited Stan and Darla Jones in Denver and had a great time. Clyde and I were married for 25 years. We have two wonderful Sons. Jon who was married to Joanne gave us Maddie & Brett and Ken who is married to Lisa gave us Bryan and Lauren.*

*Love, Mom*

*Clyde, No more suffering, Rest in Peace,  
June*

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**June Emrich** - November 12, 2021 at 11:47 AM

PG

“ *My dad grew up with Clyde on the Northwest side of Chicago and they were both members of the Wil-West Cowboys. My dad was always so proud to watch Clyde's career with the Chicago Bears and he spoke fondly of him many times over the years.*

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**Patty Sullivan Goecks** - November 11, 2021 at 06:37 PM

LA

“ So very sorry to hear of Clyde’s passing, deepest condolences to his family, and friends. I got to know Clyde when the Bears came up and stayed at the Paper Valley hotel in Appleton, WI, when the Bears played the Packers. He was always the first to arrive and get things ready for the team to arrive. Every year I got to chat with him and take his picture, the security wanted me to leave but Clyde would tell them “she’s ok, we do this every year.” I will deeply miss seeing and talking to Clyde, may he RIP.

Laurie - November 11, 2021 at 04:03 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Clyde B. Emrich.



November 11, 2021 at 12:53 PM

RW

“ Jon... Sorry to hear about your dad. He was always great with us when we saw him. Rick W.

Rick W. - November 11, 2021 at 11:19 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Clyde B. Emrich.



November 11, 2021 at 10:46 AM



“ Clyde was a great man. I enjoyed my talks with him. I had the pleasure of working with him for 8 seasons as security for the Bears. Clyde always took time before he went to bed to stop and talk and share stories. He had great stories to share, but he was also a very good listener.  
God's speed to you my friend. 🙏❤️🙏

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**Bill Ruehlmann** - November 11, 2021 at 07:43 AM

AW

“ Our deep condolences to Clyde's family. My husband Ed Whitehead and myself Annie were Clyde's insurance agents for many years. He truly was a treasure and a legend. He always had time for me when I needed advice on weight training which I still practice to this day. He made a huge impact on our daughter, Erin when he trained her in high school for volley ball. He made a huge impact on our family and will never be forgotten. Rest in peace and it was truly an honor to have you in our lives.

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**Annie Whitehead** - November 10, 2021 at 07:24 PM

PY

“ Clyde didn't know me from anyone, when I first met him in the mid-1990s. But from that first meeting, he always treated me like somebody. I am eternally grateful for his friendship and knowledge he passed along to me. Rest in peace and strength, Clyde!

Your friend,  
Paul Young  
former strength coach at Black Hills State University  
Spearfish, SD

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**Paul Young** - November 10, 2021 at 06:56 PM

EJ

“ Clyde did alot for the bears but alot of people don't know is he was a close family friend of Ed and Annie Whitehead. I'm Ed's daughter, Clyde started training me for volleyball when I was 16 yrs old and he helped me finish my master's in exercise science. All my parents did was ask if he would give me some pointers on how to get atronger. Little did we know he showed up 2 times a week for a year helping me train. Such a gift to me and my love of sport. He's the reason I still workout and why I even got my master's. Such a good man, such a good friend. RIP Clyde. I will think of you Everytime I set foot in my home gym. The gym you created for me when I was 16 yrs old. -Erin Jessen

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**Erin Jessen** - November 10, 2021 at 06:42 PM

TS

Along with his pioneering and long-lasting impact on sports, Clyde was a true gentleman. He knew how to treat others and set an example for people in professional sports when encountering "outsiders" (such as media) in everyday contact at Halas Hall, Soldier Field and elsewhere. Long after we stopped running into each other professionally, we maintained a personal connection and Clyde did numerous favors for me as he continued to work for the Bears. My sincere condolences to his family, his Bears family and all who appreciated this great man.  
Tom Shaer

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**Tom Shaer** - November 12, 2021 at 12:45 PM

JJ

*My dad grew up n same neighborhood as Clyde four years older they shared the same passion for lifting weights and for living life Healthy and smiling when they were young both had not a lot of money so they would get creative on lifting*

*Clyde was more a power guy my dad a body builder a natural meaning no steroids my dad told me a great clyde story after the war clyde came to my dads place of work the squirt bottling plant and my dad got Clyde four five cases of pop stacked them by plant door clyde bent over to pick them all up my dad asked hey clyde you need a hand clyde smiled at my dad lifted them all set them in his trunk looked at my dad bent over picked up the back end of his karmin gia sports car said naw Ray there not that heavy I got it my dad was laughing so hard he couldn't believe but clyde was a great man when my dad got sick I reached out to clyde he called my dad it meant so much to my dad rip clyde goto the gym with my dad like ole times rip both you*

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**Jay R Jacobs** - November 12, 2021 at 05:14 PM

MS

*Coach Emrich helped me & my teammates back in the early 60's. My family lived across the street from where he lived at Campbell & Sunnyside. Almost every morning he could be seen on the parallel bars at Waters Park. He was, by far, the most popular athlete in our neighborhood (and just about anywhere else that he showed up), being a world-class weightlifter at the YMCA"s (both Irving Park & Ravenswood). All my friends have continued to follow his career. He will be dearly missed.*

*Mike Wulf, Sr.*

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**Mike Wulf, Sr.** - November 14, 2021 at 01:09 PM

SO

*Dear Jon and Ken, and June, and all of the family. I am a cousin of Clyde. My mother, Alice (Glaister) and Clyde's mother, Helen were sisters. Know of my prayers and thoughts for all of you as we remember Clyde. My family was always so proud of Clyde. I watched the Bears games for years, watching carefully until I saw Clyde! May he rest in peace, with Helen and Clyde, and his siblings. Sister Dorothy Glaister, OOP*

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**Sister Dorothy Glaister, OP** - November 14, 2021 at 02:51 PM