



SENIOR SOFTBALL PLAYER PROFILE: BOB REEVES
By Larry Wolfe

Young Bob Reeves had a challenging start to life, spending three years in a children's' home, then quitting school before his junior year to support his mother and younger siblings. However, as you'll see, he met those challenges and went on to a very successful career and happy life.

At sixteen, Bob began working as a bag boy at a South Bend Kroger store, beginning what would become a thirty-five year career with the company. Over the years, he progressed from butcher, to head meat cutter, store co-manager and store manager. Moving upward as a "corporate man" for Kroger, he held positions such as regional merchandising representative, meat buyer for a fifty-seven store, three-state region and meat merchandiser. He had assignments in Ft. Wayne, Nashville, Detroit, Grand Rapids and at the company's headquarters in Cincinnati. His major accomplishments included helping to develop the Top Value Stamps program, the in-store Butcher Shop concept and the first Super Stores for Kroger. He also traveled nationally for the

company, opening new stores in multiple locations and helping produce meat-related TV commercials.

Given his early start and longevity with Kroger, Bob was able to take early retirement at age fifty-one, but he didn't really retire. Instead he went into business for himself as a representative for meat suppliers, selling product to Kroger and other large retailers. After another ten years, he did retire and he and his wife Barbara moved to Sun Lakes.

Bob has been and is involved in numerous sports. His first love was basketball and as a scrappy "shooting guard" he led his South Bend industrial league team to two city championships. His team practically invented transition basketball before it had a name. Back in the fifties, teams slowly moved the ball up the floor and ran set plays, but Bob and his teammates successfully utilized the "run and gun" approach.

As soon as Bob moved to Sun Lakes, he joined our softball league and is now in his eighteenth year. He has played on various age-group tournament teams, earning four world championship rings along the way. In 2001, he also managed the first Sun Lakes team to go to a national championship tournament. This year he was player-manager of our Desert Cove-sponsored team.

His biggest sports thrill came recently when he rolled a perfect 300 game in a local bowling league. Try that at age 74 with two replacement knees!

Barbara and Bob enjoy traveling and have been on numerous cruises, including trips to Alaska, Canada, the Caribbean and the Panama Canal. Bob is also an accomplished karaoke singer, sometimes entertaining other passengers on their cruises.

A great career, happy life, wonderful 54-year marriage, four super kids and eight grandkids.... Bob certainly met and overcame those early challenges. His time in that children's home and being the family breadwinner at sixteen taught him discipline. He successfully applied those lessons and principles to his life and work. And he succeeded...big time.