



## David Nicholas Falcone

January 11, 1945 - May 28, 2026

On a cold, snowy day, January 11, 1945, in Chicago, a beautiful young mother and her husband boarded a streetcar bound for Franklin Boulevard Hospital. There Madeleine Savageau Falcone gave birth to David Nicholas. He was welcomed into the family by his father, Nicholas and his two brothers, John and Paul. He would grow up surrounded by a loving close-knit family that included cousins, Steve Savageau, Alan, Roger and Charlotte Weaver. Oh, the things the cousins found to do!

When the family relocated to Melrose Park, IL, David attended Robert Louis Stevenson Elementary School, where he made a life-long friend in Wally Winter. David accepted Christ at an early age and was baptized (“twice to be sure.”) At Camp Awana, his mentor and friend became Lance Laham, a great influence on his life, and they exchanged letters across the years. He attended Proviso East High School where he fell in love with sociology—a discipline that influenced the rest of his life. David excelled in gymnastics (first cultivated and supported by Lance Latham) winning many metals and qualifying for the state meet. In gymnastics, Dave and Wally made long-time friends Gary Vertuno and Howie Sokol. They relived many good memories at their gatherings and managed to demonstrate their favorite moves. After high school, David joined the Army Reserves and became a Military Police Officer, qualifying for best expert marksman out of some 4,000 competitive shooters.

After the military, David graduated from Elmhurst College and became a police officer in Elmhurst. In policing, David's Christian values were tested and proven many times: he arrested corrupt officers and was instrumental in getting a federal judge removed from office. A local newspaper dubbed him Serpico. He was one of the first officers on the scene of the notorious, bloody shootout at the Northlake Bank robbery in 1967—the memories haunted him forever. David, on several occasions, transported the union leader, Jimmy Hoffa. The stories abound!

When the Falcone families moved to Ellington, MO, David joined them. It was there that he met and fell in love with a local girl, Joan Stevenson; they were married in Hamilton, Bermuda by the Registrar General in 1983. In nearby Flat River, David accepted the position of Criminal Justice Chair at Mineral Area College where he was credited with “bringing academe to the department.” There, he made life-long friends in the President, Dixie Kohn and the Counselor, Dennis Cox. David encouraged Joan to pursue her education and together the two began a new adventure in academics. David earned a Master of Arts at Illinois State University—commuting to Normal, IL 2-3 times a week while teaching full time. Upon completion of his degree, he was hired as a faculty member. While teaching and doing research, he completed his doctorate at St. Louis University, again making the long drive. He called himself “a Road Scholar.”

While at Illinois State University, David's teaching and research won a number of coveted awards including: Teacher of the Year Award, Research Initiative Award, and Outstanding Researcher Award. As an Expert Witness, his testimony in court cases across the U.S. set the records straight on policing and high-speed chases—he was labeled within legal circles as “The Golden Boy from Illinois.” He researched and published extensively including *The History of Policing*; *Dictionary of American Criminal Justice Criminology and Criminal Law*, and co-authored *Crime and Policing in Rural and Small Towns*

in America. His research and testimony changed procedures for policing and is cited in a brief by the United States Supreme Court. His Christian values came to the forefront again as he influenced many Criminal Justice students to “never bend the rules to arrest/convict” because “the means do not justify the ends.”

Upon retirement in 2007, as full professor and acting department chair, David and Joan continued their love of travel—often with dear ISU friends Barbara & Alan Nourie, Susan & Galen Winchip, and Deborah & David Gentry. The four couples have spent decades together cooking, sipping wine, discussing university life, and laughing—always laughing. The friendship continues across Missouri, South Carolina, Chicago and Arizona. In 2010, Joan and David moved to Bolivar where they joined Open Hearts United Methodist Church and, with the help of brother Paul, designed and built their dream home, Southwinds, doing much of the work themselves.

It was from Southwinds that David began his heavenly journey surrounded by his loving family and the smell of pasta sauce from his recipe simmering. We can only imagine the heavenly celebration as he sees Jesus’ face and reunites with his family and his beloved pets, Max and Pompie. We can just see him walking in with that authoritative stride, dressed to the nines in his traditional Weejuns, khaki pants, white shirt, tie, and navy blazer.

He is preceded in death by his parents and two brothers. He is survived by his wife, Joan, sisters-in-law Gloria and Janice Falcone, nieces Kristina Fox, Cheri Adcock, Michelle Wirth, Elizabeth Walz, Angela Funderburk, and Nicole Falcone; one nephew, Christian Falcone. On the Stevenson side, sisters-in-law, Lorene Goodman, Wilma Myers, Peggy Richards, Nancy (Mike) DeMent and many nieces and nephews, notably Darry & Kerry Goodman, with whom Joan and David traveled extensively and spent much enjoyable time together

laughing and eating their favorite meal of grilled pork steaks and mac and cheese. David will be greatly missed—his beautiful baritone singing voice, his love of the Beach Boys, CCR, Corvettes, and steam trains, his bold laughter, his lectures, his story telling, and his love of life. His beautiful, well-lived life spans 81 years, 4 months, and 17 days; yet, it does not feel long enough.

A visitation will be held from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM on Tuesday, June 2, 2026, at Butler Funeral Home in Bolivar.

Funeral services will be held at 10:30 AM on Wednesday, June 3, 2026, at Open Hearts United Methodist Church in Bolivar.

Burial will take place on Thursday, June 4, 2026, at Rutter Cemetery in Reynolds County, Missouri

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUN 2. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Butler Funeral Home - Bolivar  
407 E. Broadway  
Bolivar, MO 65613  
(417) 326-5233  
<https://butlerfuneralhome.com/>

## Funeral Service

JUN 3. 10:30 AM (CT)

Open Hearts United Methodist Church  
105 East Division Street  
Bolivar, MO 65613

# Tribute Wall

DM

“ Diann & Ron McSpadden’65 purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of David Nicholas Falcone.



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**Diann & Ron McSpadden’65** - June 02 at 01:55 PM

DM

“ Diann & Ron McSpadden’65 planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David Nicholas Falcone.

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**Diann & Ron McSpadden’65** - June 02 at 01:55 PM

DG

“ Darryl & Kerry Goodman purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of David Nicholas Falcone.



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**Darryl & Kerry Goodman** - June 01 at 03:31 PM

DG

“ Darryl & Kerry Goodman planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David Nicholas Falcone.

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**Darryl & Kerry Goodman** - June 01 at 03:31 PM

HS

“ Howie & Patti Sokol purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of David Nicholas Falcone.



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**Howie & Patti Sokol** - June 01 at 02:28 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of David Nicholas Falcone.



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June 01 at 02:09 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of David Nicholas Falcone.

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June 01 at 02:09 PM

DS

“ Dixie and Suzanne purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of David Nicholas Falcone.



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**Dixie and Suzanne** - May 31 at 05:10 PM

DS

“ Dixie and Suzanne planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of David Nicholas Falcone.

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**Dixie and Suzanne** - May 31 at 05:10 PM

DG

“ Most assuredly, if trains exist in heaven, David is perhaps a passenger, but more likely the engineer. May we see you at the depot one day.

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**Dave and Deb Gentry** - May 31 at 04:56 PM