



Dale Joseph McLellan

June 6, 1949 - August 10, 2024

Dale J. McLellan, A True Renaissance Man,
Passes at Age 75

If a Renaissance man is defined as a cultured man knowledgeable, educated, and proficient in a wide range of fields, Dale Joseph McLellan was the quintessential Renaissance man. And if being a real Detroiter means being part of a modern-day Renaissance, then that is another hallmark of a man who will be greatly missed by everyone fortunate enough to make his acquaintance.

Dale, born in Detroit June 6, 1949, passed away on Saturday, Aug. 10, at age 75 of cancer-related causes. He is survived by his incredibly loving wife, Gretchen Ruff McLellan, and his children: Jessica McLellan and Daniel McLellan (E.J.), and siblings Don McLellan (Christine) and Patricia Mitchell (Robert), as well as grandsons Dylan, Daniel, Henry and Samuel McLellan, and Max Vanderwerff.

Dale is also survived by Gretchen's daughters and their families: Jenifer Snow and sons Atticus and Odin Hilts; Alicia Snow (Rodney Norburg) and her children, Clara and Annica Kelley.

He is also survived by four nieces and a nephew, nine grand nieces and

nephews, and two great grand nephews. Dale is also survived by his first wife, Mary Jo, and an incalculable array of friends, who undoubtedly miss his wit and sense of humor, punctuated by an infectious belly laugh that bespoke unbridled joy at humor both obvious as well as subtle.

A true Renaissance man is one not only capable of mastering a plethora of fields, but also does so with grace, humility and self-deprecation. That was Dale McLellan times a hundred. His accomplished law career was complemented by a love and deep knowledge of art, music, literature and sports. He appreciated the nuance of Greek history as much as he did the recent Renaissance of the Lions and the tedious rebuilds of Detroit's other professional sports teams. He was with them, win or tie.

Dale graduated from St. Theresa High School in Detroit, lettering in football and track. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1971 from the Monteith College of Wayne State University in Detroit, also his law degree from Wayne State in 1976, before launching a successful, decades-long legal career. From 1976 until 2011, Dale was a partner/shareholder with Collins, Einhorn, Farrell & Ulanoff P.C., litigating a wide variety of cases including toxic tort, pharmaceuticals, medical and malpractice, business/contract and many others. He then became an independent legal consultant for another decade.

A member of the Michigan Defense Trial counsel, the Oakland County and Macomb County bar associations, Dale earned more than a dozen industry awards, and was also identified as a mentor by many young people as they entered the legal profession.

As all-absorbing as the law can be, Dale found time to hone his athletic skills well into adulthood. In addition to high school sports, Dale played hockey and baseball, and loved to ski, roller blade and cycle. Though he often complained about the early golf tee times preferred by his friends, he dutifully answered

the bell all summer long, before enjoying an afternoon kayak voyage on Hammond Lake.

While Dale and Gretchen were only a couple for eight years, and married for three, it was impossible to miss the fact that they belonged together.

Overnight visitors to their spacious (thankfully, because Dale had more true collectibles than most museums) West Bloomfield home were often kept up late and awakened early by the rhythm and conversations of two people deeply in love.

Being a true Detroitter, Dale's friendships were deep, many dating back to childhood. But he welcomed new friends into his life, including Gretchen's friends, without equivocation, embracing everyone who came along for the glorious ride. He was the kind of man newcomers felt they had known their entire lives, another characteristic of a Renaissance man.

Dale's other loves were dogs, babies, and his special baby of 21 years, a black Thunderbird (if you're a Detroitter, you know it's a Ford) convertible he drove during the summer, top down, classic rock blaring from the radio, enjoying his own version of the Woodward Dream Cruise.

Friends and family will gather on Saturday, October 5, from 10:00 am until time of memorial service at 11:00 am at the Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Home, 705 W. Eleven Mile Rd. (4 blks. E. of Woodward), Royal Oak, 48067.

Donations in Dale's memory may be made to the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 10069, Detroit, MI 48210 www.cancer.org.

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

OCT 5. 10:00 AM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak
705 W. Eleven Mile Road
Royal Oak, MI 48067
(248) 541-7000
royal@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Memorial Service

OCT 5. 11:00 AM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak
705 W. Eleven Mile Road
Royal Oak, MI 48067
(248) 541-7000
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Tribute Wall

SF

“ Swindlehurst Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Dale Joseph McLellan.



Swindlehurst Family - October 05, 2024 at 09:51 AM

SU

“ Susie purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Dale Joseph McLellan.



Susie - October 04, 2024 at 06:04 PM

SI

“ Saif and Frieda Imam purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Dale Joseph McLellan.



Saif and Frieda Imam - October 04, 2024 at 03:01 PM

JG

“ Jeannie and Guy purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Dale Joseph McLellan.



Jeannie and Guy - October 04, 2024 at 02:42 PM

JG

“ Jeannie and Guy planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dale Joseph McLellan.

Jeannie and Guy - October 04, 2024 at 02:42 PM



“ Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of Dale Joseph McLellan.



October 04, 2024 at 11:16 AM

SC

“ Scott planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dale Joseph McLellan.

Scott - October 04, 2024 at 11:16 AM



“ Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Dale Joseph McLellan.



October 02, 2024 at 09:07 AM

TF

“ *The Prindle family purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Dale Joseph McLellan.*



The Prindle family - September 30, 2024 at 02:21 PM

NC

“ *Nancy & Gary Coates purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Dale Joseph McLellan.*



Nancy & Gary Coates - September 29, 2024 at 09:01 AM

NC

“ *Nancy & Gary Coates planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dale Joseph McLellan.*

Nancy & Gary Coates - September 29, 2024 at 09:01 AM

HS

“ *RIP Dale 🙏🙏 from a cousin of Mary Jo*

Harry Schneider - September 19, 2024 at 08:19 PM