



Larry M. Smith

June 27, 1938 - August 22, 2019

Larry M. Smith, 81 of San Antonio, Florida passed away August 22, 2019. He was born in Fairgrove, Michigan. He was predeceased by his parents Joe and Alice Smith, his son, Scott, in 1998. He is survived by his loving wife Joan (of almost 61 years, September 6th), his daughter, Lisa Prestininzi; sons, Mark (Melissa) Smith and Brad Smith; his grandchildren, Justin, Curt, Samantha, Michelle, Josh, Brandon, Katie, Michael, Matthew and Ashley, and 7 great-grandchildren, daughter-in-law, Sherri Smith-Gronski, brothers-in-law, Paul and Joe VanMill, nephews, Craig and Chris Van Mill, and niece, Cheryl Van Mill.

He was a graduate of McKenzie High School and Eastern Michigan University where he earned his Master's Degree in Education and Administration. He began his teaching career in 1961 in Saline, Michigan. His career in the Utica Community Schools began in 1965 as a teacher and counselor before becoming Director of Pupil Services at UCS Central Office. After retirement from UCS in 2001, he and Joan became part-time residents of Florida in 2006 and permanent residents in 2012. In his earlier years, Larry was a multi-sport athlete, coach and referee in the YMCA youth basketball and baseball programs, and President of the Utica Michigan Rotary Club. While living in Florida, Larry was an active member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Dade City and of the Tampa Bay Golf and Country Club. He enjoyed golfing, fishing, dancing with Joan, socializing, and spending time with his family and friends. Larry has always been described as a true gentleman, good man, and

genuinely kind human being. Wherever he was and whomever he met, Larry made people laugh, feel comfortable, important, and loved. He will be missed dearly and remembered fondly by all who knew and loved him. A Funeral Mass was held on Saturday, August 31, 2019 at 11am at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, in Dade City, Florida. Memorial visitation will be held on September 6, 2019 from 3-8pm with a Celebration of Life Service held at 7:00 pm at Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Home, 8459 Hall Road, Utica, Michigan. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested donations be made to The Larry Smith Scholarship Fund, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, OR Karmanos Cancer Center, Detroit, Michigan.

Cemetery Details

Guardian Angel Cemetery

4701 Rochester Road
Oakland Township, MI 48306

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

SEP 6. 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Wm Sullivan and Son Funeral Home
8459 Hall Road
Utica, MI 48317
(586) 731-2411
utica@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Celebration of Life

SEP 6. 7:00 PM (ET)

Wm Sullivan and Son Funeral Home
8459 Hall Road
Utica, MI 48317
(586) 731-2411
utica@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Inurnment

SEP **14**. 1:00 PM (ET)

Guardian Angel Cemetery
4701 Rochester Road
Oakland Township, MI 48306

Tribute Wall



“ I don't know if it's appropriate to post, especially three months later...
Dad was the rock of our family. The rock to other families. The rock to neighbors and friends. Dad was the hero that wasn't on TV or in the movies. Dad remembered everyone's name. And their kid's names, and their parents, and their grand-kids, and their siblings. He didn't remember like a parlor trick; he remembered because it was important to you. Therefore, it was important to him. Dad was the best dad that a son could ask for. He was smart, witty, punny, and loyal-to-a-fault. He was caring, stern (rarely, but dang, when he was stern, you straightened up!), funny, and patient. He was the most loving, understanding, wise, humble, hard-working man I've ever met. My friends have told me that they aspired to be like him, and so do I. Give me some time, Dad; someday I hope to be like you. I love and miss you so very much.

Brad Smith - November 19, 2019 at 09:05 PM

TB

“ Joan and family, Larry will be remembered and missed. Larry and I first met when he was coaching in Saline and I played football against his team. He related the story to me one day over a drink . He was a great administrator who made touch decisions based on what was good for students and the Utica Community Schools. We will remember him as a super family man, one who was fun to be with and a good friend.

Tom & Carol Bodell - September 06, 2019 at 02:04 PM



Thank you, Mr. Bodell

Brad Smith - November 19, 2019 at 08:25 PM

RT

“ I remember many years ago that my car died in front of Utica High school. It was full of grocery bags So I took a chance and went in the school to see if I could receive help. Lo and behold here comes Larry who actually drive me home to 23 mile. I never will forget his generosity.
They were always on of our favorite friends

Roman and Caroline Typkiewicz - September 03, 2019 at 02:30 PM



Thank you for sharing this. We are so proud that our Dad was the kind who would help whenever he could.

Brad Smith - November 19, 2019 at 08:37 PM

BE

“ Joan & family,
We were so shocked to learn of Larry's passing. Our friendship with Larry goes way back. From Cub Scouts to our Jr. High & High School days. I (Bob) played on baseball teams together, spending parts of summers at the Smith family cabin near Oscoda and many other good times. We want the family to know that times will be difficult for a while but remembering all of the good things you shared will see you through. May God bless his soul.

Marilyn & Bob Elliott

Bob & Marilyn Elliott - September 02, 2019 at 04:33 PM



Thank you. "Marilyn and Bob Elliot" were always part of Dad's stories!

Brad Smith - November 19, 2019 at 08:47 PM

BK

“ How do you say goodbye to a guy like Larry? He was easy and fun to be around, always appreciated the other guy, and worked a job not everyone could do. He made boundary decisions as to where children went to school...choices not always agreeable to all sides. Stories remembered by "the oldies" will forever be repeated. The Friday night \$20 golf and fish fries at Wolverine Golf Club, the mind-busting scavenger hunt parties, checking snow depths to determine "snow days", the "millage" elections, etc. Who will furnish my chocolate eclairs?? We will miss him dearly.

Barb and Jim King - September 02, 2019 at 11:23 AM



Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. King. I know that you know how much you mean to Mom and Dad. Great memories, and a wonderful salute.

Brad Smith - November 19, 2019 at 08:47 PM

MJ

“ Early on, when I was math department chair, I had to go to the board office to finish up the paperwork for a new textbook purchase. I had just returned from maternity leave and my daughter Amy was very little. I brought her with me that day and asked Larry if she could sleep in her car seat in his office while I ran around gathering information from other departments. He said no. Instead he held her on his chest, patting her little back, and smiling his wonderful smile for the hour or so I needed. Larry was a great administrator but more important he was a very good man. Joan, thank you to you and your family for sharing him with us.

Margaret Jelsma - August 30, 2019 at 03:37 PM



Margaret, what a beautiful memory. Thank you so much for sharing Dad's softer side. we saw it all the time, but thank you for sharing it with others!

Brad Smith - November 19, 2019 at 08:53 PM

PC

“ 1 file added to the album *We will miss you Larry! Bill and Trisha Crabb*



Patricia Crabb - August 30, 2019 at 12:24 PM

RV

“ *No matter the position he held, Larry Smith was a consummate and compassionate educator. To be present during one of his public presentations, was to witness a great communicator with a wonderful wit. My condolences to Joan, Brad and the entire family.*

Bob Van Camp

Robert VanCamp - August 29, 2019 at 07:02 PM

TF

“ *Larry was described as " a true gentleman, good man, and genuinely kind human being." Those words best describe Larry. Condolences to his wife, family and friends.*

Tom Fenoseff

thomas fenoseff - August 29, 2019 at 03:03 PM

DT

“ So many great memories, from ride sharing when I started teaching at Sterling Jr High and Larry was a counselor, to working with Larry when he was in pupil services and hours in the budget committee. Better was a friendship that I will always cherish. Larry was always positive and professional and was respected throughout UCS. Larry, thanks for being the MC at my retirement party, great time! Joan and family, our prayers for you as you face this time of remembrance for your good husband and father.
Dave Turrel

Dave Turrel - August 29, 2019 at 08:26 AM

LT

“ What a wonderful, always upbeat man! Sorry Joan and family for your loss! Linda Thomas

Linda Thomas - August 28, 2019 at 08:47 PM

JG

“ I am so sorry to hear this news. I thought the world of Larry, he was always so friendly and helpful. I loved having his and Joan's children in class. He was an administrator who went out of his way to be supportive. Prayers that loving memories will lift you up and sustain you.

Jeanne Garwood - August 28, 2019 at 06:24 PM

PY

“ Joan and Family,
My condolences on Larry's passing. I will always look back at our days at UCS with fondness and knowing that Larry was "one of the good guys."
Paul Yelensky

Paul Yelensky - August 28, 2019 at 05:59 PM

WC

“ You made our lives more joyful. We will never forget at the wonderful times at Tampa Bay Golf and Country Club. All the dinners and dances and parties and pre parties were so much fun. Go rest in heaven now. Bill and Trisha.

William R Crabb - August 28, 2019 at 01:13 PM

JA

Great people Larry & Joan. Before we lived in Fairfield Glade TN they were using a timeshare there at Easter time. They invited us to stay over a nite & play golf the following day. They had no idea what they were getting into. I probably played the WORST round of my life. Also, Larry & I found we shared a birthday & exchanged greetings through the years. Never met the family tough, & I'm sorry for that. Love & prayers, Jo & Bob Ames

Joanne M Ames - August 29, 2019 at 10:49 AM

WC

“ 38 files added to the album We will miss you Larry! Bill and Trisha Crabb



William R Crabb - August 28, 2019 at 01:07 PM

RC

“ Ray and I have so many wonderful memories of the times we spent with Larry and Joan.

We went on several cruises with them.

We shared so many laughs.

We were so appreciative for the party they gave as a tribute to Ray for all he did for Tampa bay Golf and Country Club.

Larry and Joan along with other close friends gave us a dinner party before we moved from FL.

We cherish all the wonderful times we shared.

When we moved from Groveland, FL we sold our house quickly and couldn't move into our home in Georgia as it was being built and not ready to close. We were going to stay at an extended stay motel for a month.

Larry and Joan insisted we stay at their home. They were in Michigan at the time. We were so appreciative. Very generous friends.

Ray and Cathie

Ray and Cathie - August 27, 2019 at 09:59 PM

FS

“ My deepest condolences to you Joan, Lisa, Mark and Brad. I have so many memories that I could share. All of our trips to Puerto Vallarta were filled with memories, as our many pictures show. One of my favorite memories was at my retirement party when Larry had asked to speak. Oh speak he did. First, of course, he had a lot of fun with me and how he perceived me always wanting to look perfect even to the point of swimming under water in our pool in Mexico without a hair out of place. Right. He ended that speech announcing a school closing for the next day. Of course our school superintendent and board members in attendance quickly rescinded that announcement. That was Larry. You never knew what to expect but you always knew he was there for you. He had your back. He was a very special guy and he will be missed. Good bye Larry. God's Blessings.

Fran Soper - August 27, 2019 at 07:24 PM