



Ralph L. McElhinney

June 22, 1938 - February 12, 2022

McElhinney, Ralph L.

Age 83, February 12, 2022, in Rochester Hills, Michigan, formerly of Sterling Heights, Michigan. Beloved husband of the late Helen "Bubbie" (died December 4th, 2017). Ralph and Helen were married August 4, 1962 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He was born June 22, 1938 in Dysart, Black Hawk County, Iowa; to his late parents Eric and Judith (Nelson). Loving father of James (Paula Gregoricka Jilek) and the late Jill, Robert (Laurel) Jilek, Joyce (Dr. Joseph) Bayma, Joe (Dr. Joyce) Jilek, and the late Daniel, survived by his wife Joy (Allen) Dumont. Dear brother of Judi (Joe) Peluso and the late Doris (Jim) Kimmelshue, and the late Warren (Pat) McElhinney. Proud grandfather of 13 and great grandfather of many. Ralph graduated from Genessee Consolidated High School in 1956. Served his country by joining the United States Marine Corp during the Korean War. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Oakland University; Masters of Arts from Wayne State University, and retired after 25 years as an educator at Henry Ford High School, in Sterling Heights, Michigan. He also coached high school tennis at Henry Ford High School. He helped manage their family farm in Iowa. Ralph and Helen's inurnment will be held on Monday, May 9th, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. with Military Honors at Great Lakes National Cemetery, Holly, Michigan. Family request donations to Utica Community Schools Educational Foundation, 7600 18 Mile Road, Sterling Heights, MI 48314. Please share a memory at www.SullivanFuneralDirectors.com

Cemetery Details

Great Lakes National Cemetery

4200 Belford Road
Holly Township, MI 48442

Tribute Wall

KB

“ I'm sorry that I am late posting to Mr. McElhinney's remembrance wall.

I had Mr. McElhinney for 9th grade Civics at the then Sterling Jr. High school. I remember him teaching us current events with a quiz every Friday. This was in addition to our regular curriculum. Back in the day, before education was all about testing.

From time to time I have thought of him. I always had the intention of writing to him and letting him know what a great teacher he was. I'm extremely sorry that I missed the opportunity but I know he hears me know.

Kathi Gamache Barringer - March 06, 2022 at 08:53 AM

WS

“ A 1956 Geneseo Consolidated High School graduating classmate of Ralph. Geneseo was a rural school from Buckingham. Iowa. Our sympathy to Ralph's family. We will miss him.

Warren Schrader - February 23, 2022 at 09:55 AM

ER

“ Ralph and I were classmates at good old Geneseo, Class of 1956. We were a small class of eleven members. With all those years in class together, we got to know each other very well. Then in later years, we got to meet Helen, too. Both are missed.

Eleanor Roquet - February 22, 2022 at 06:33 PM

DM

“ *Ralph and I started kindergarten together and graduated high school together. He was a good friend.*



Dennis Mitchell - February 20, 2022 at 01:15 PM

JG

“ *Mr. McElhinney was one of my favorite teachers. I had classes with him at both Sterling Jr and HFII. My older siblings all had him at Sterling Jr and my younger brother at HFII. I can remember always looking forward to his history classes. My siblings and I agree, he was the best. My sincere condolences to the family.*

Judy Gamache HFII class of 1977

David Gamache Stevenson class of 1972

Cindy Gamache Stevenson class of 1973

Kathi Gamache Stevenson class of 1974

Mark Gamache HFII class of 1986

Judy L Gamache - February 18, 2022 at 08:58 PM

EW

“ I had many good teachers at HFII including Searing, Smiegel, Boss, Arscheene, Woody, Mandl and of course "Big Mac" They were tough but fair. Something they all shared in common...a love for teaching! My parents inspired me to become a teacher but bc of the teachers I had in HS, college and grad school I always had good role models to draw from that made me the teacher I am today. Mac pushed us hard to become better writers and thinkers, I appreciate that much more NOW than I did then, but he LOVED teaching history. It showed! I'll never forget him. RIP "Big Mac"
-Eric Weaver Class of 1989 UCS teacher since 1998

eric c weaver - February 18, 2022 at 04:21 PM

RK

“ I took a World History class that Mr. McElhinney taught when I was in 11th grade. He was one of those teachers you never forget. Tough but extremely fair. I admit I was not an ideal student but those days in class will never be forgotten. Peace be with you sir and I salute you fellow veteran.
Roy Kirchoff class of 1977

Roy Kirchoff - February 18, 2022 at 12:27 AM

MG

“ The best teacher at any level, including grad school. He loved his job and treated us with respect. I often think about the materials in both AP history classes, but mostly the twinkle in his eye when sharing an amusing relevant anecdote. He was the rare teacher that left a wake bigger than just the knowledge he shared.

mark g - February 17, 2022 at 10:26 PM

M(

“ If I could name one teacher in high school who not only prepared me for college, but for life in general, it was Mr. McElhinney. By far, the hardest teacher I had, but he went above and beyond to prepare his students for college. It's be more than 30 years since I was in his class, but I still love to share stories of him with my 15 year old son who now attends Ford. RIP Mr. Mac, you were truly one of the greats.

Michelle Bakun (Macuga) - February 17, 2022 at 09:46 PM

JA

“ Mr. McElhinney was my favorite teacher at Ford. I had older siblings that had him as a teacher and I couldn't wait for my turn. I loved walking into his class every day. I studied so hard for my first AP US History test partly to make him proud. He made my love for history grow even stronger.

R.I.P. Mr. Ralph

Joanne Best Andree (daughter of Mel Best-fellow Ford II history teacher)

Class of 1989

Joanne Andree - February 17, 2022 at 09:16 PM

CW

Mr. McElhinney drilled into me the importance of being concise in my writing. I have taken that lesson with me and it has served me well in my career and life. RIP and thank you!

Carole Wegner - February 17, 2022 at 09:28 PM

SG

Mr. McElinney was my Western Civ teacher in '78 and I will always remember how animated and passionate he was about history. Unfortunately, as less than a stellar student, it was difficult for this sophomore to get excited about history at 8:30 am. But I have always remembered his enthusiasm and generosity in sharing his knowledge with us. RIP, Mr. M! You live on in our fond memories.

Susan King George - February 19, 2022 at 01:05 PM

JK

“*If I had to pick a favorite HS teacher, it would be Mr. McElhinney, whom we affectionately called “Ralph” — though only among ourselves. He was knowledgeable, wise, witty, encouraging and entertaining all at once. He ran his class like a college course, and treated his AP students like colleagues, inviting us to his home and taking us out for breakfast on Senior Skip Day. I had him for International Relations as a sophomore, AP U.S. History as a junior, and AP Western Civilization as a senior. Thanks to his mentoring, I scored 5’s on both AP tests.*

In my mind, I still can recall that stentorian basso profundo voice of his resonating from his ample barrel chest. They say you forget most of what you learn in school, but I believe I remember much of what he taught me. Teachers like him make the world a better place, one student at a time. — Jeffrey Kaczmarczyk, Henry Ford II High School Class of 1981.

Jeffrey Kaczmarczyk - February 17, 2022 at 09:13 PM