



## Russell Murphy

August 17, 1946 - July 16, 2024

Russell P. Murphy, age 77, of Pentwater (MI) and Royal Oak, passed away, surrounded by his much loved family on July 16, 2024.

Russ was born in Detroit in August 1946 to Russell A. and Annette J. (Young) Murphy. Nearly a lifetime member of the National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica, Russ attended Shrine Grade School and Sacred Heart Seminary before graduating from Brother Rice High School, in the first graduating class. Russ also attended Saint Joseph's College (Rensselaer, IN) and received a B.A. in marketing from Detroit Institute of Technology.

Following college graduation he served in the United States Army and became the company clerk for Co. B, 6th BN at Fort Dix, N.J. and was honorably discharged at Spec 5 rank.

Russ had a successful career in advertising, marketing and communications working for Ross Roy and Burroughs Corporation and later retiring from Henkel Corporation in Madison Heights after 20 years as Communications and Marketing Director.

Russ' naturally gregarious personality drew him to others and he had a range of friends both far and near. He looked forward not only to the peace, quiet and seclusion of his annual Georgian Bay fishing trips with buddies that

continued for 25 years, but also his hunting weekends spent with friends in Northern Michigan. With the free time that retirement afforded him he worked with several friends, serving Habitat for Humanity in Louisiana by helping to rebuild hurricane ravaged houses and later restoring dorms at Camp Sancta Maria in Michigan.

Following his retirement, he completed his Coast Guard Captain's license requirements and started the Irish Wake Sailing Charters out of Pentwater. An avid sailor and someone who enjoyed the weather, water and wind, he crewed for his sailing buddies on several Queen's Cup races across Lake Michigan, participated in several Ensign National races as well as many Pentwater Yacht Club (PYC) offshore races on Lake Michigan. Russ proudly served as the Commodore of the PYC and worked with the local sheriff in presenting boater safety classes to the community.

Russ is survived by his wife of 53 years, Joann; daughters, Meg (JD) Armstrong, Katie Murphy and Colleen (Joe Torosian) Murphy; grandchildren Quinn, Rowan and Finley Armstrong, cousins Marge Korski, Mary (Phil) Weinfurt, Cheryl (Ken) Kalal, Todd (Renee) Bielawa and his entire Milwaukee family. He was predeceased by his parents and beloved cousins Jim Bielawa and Fr. Tom Bielawa.

He leaves behind friends from many stages of his life, including Burroughs, Henkel, the Shrine Christmas tree sale, fellow Shrine School parents, the PYC and Pentwater Artisan Learning Center.

The family will receive friends Tuesday, July 23, from 2:00-8:00 pm at Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Home (705 W Eleven Mile Rd, Royal Oak), with a scripture service at 7:00 pm. The funeral mass will be held Wednesday, July 24, at 10:00 am at National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica (Woodward at 12 Mile Rd., Royal Oak). Visitation at church begins at 9:30 am.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a gift to the Pentwater Artisan Learning Center (<https://pentwaterartisan.org/>), the Tunnel to Towers Foundation (<https://t2t.org/>) or the Gary Sinise Foundation (<https://www.garysinisefoundation.org/donate>).

Share a memory at [www.SullivanFuneralDirectors.com](http://www.SullivanFuneralDirectors.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Holy Sepulchre Cemetery

25800 W. 10 Mile Road  
10 Mile Road @ Beech Road  
Southfield, MI 48033

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUL 23. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (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/>

## Scripture Service

JUL 23. 7:00 PM (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/>

## Funeral Mass

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JUL **24.** 10:00 AM (ET)

National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica  
2100 W. 12 Mile Road  
Royal Oak, MI 48073

# Tribute Wall

SJ

“ I had a couple of bonding experiences with Russ over the years while we worked at Henkel/Cognis. He hosted myself and a fellow associate at the Detroit Yacht Club. He and I chuckled at creative presented to North American Marketing Communications leaders at a gathering in the Manhattan headquarters of a NYC ad agency. Lastly, I had fun with Russ the last time I saw him in a Chicago gathering of Communications/Marketing folks. We went to the Billy Goat Tavern before a Cubs game. I met my wife during that business trip. RIP Russ, you were a good guy!

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**Scott Jacobs** - June 23, 2025 at 07:11 AM

CK

“ Russ was one of a kind. My husband and I both worked at Parker/OMI/Henkel with him for many years. We had the pleasure of visiting his Pentwater paradise and spending time with his lovely wife for a gal's weekend while the guys golfed. I personally had the experience of sailing with him and our group in Purchasing and it was always a much repeated story thru the years. God bless his beautiful family and may they remember all the wonderful times they had with such an awesome human being. Rest in peace dear Russ, you will surely be missed. Connie & Gary Kent

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**Connie Kent** - July 23, 2024 at 08:56 AM

AT

“ Andrea Tasch planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Russell Murphy.

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**Andrea Tasch** - July 22, 2024 at 06:13 PM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Russell Murphy.*



July 22, 2024 at 06:13 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Russell Murphy.*



July 22, 2024 at 03:18 PM



“ *Craig & Pat purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Russell Murphy.*



**Craig & Pat** - July 22, 2024 at 12:52 PM



“ *As a fellow 1964 graduate of Brother Rice, I remember Russ very well. Just a sincerely good guy. God love you and your family, Russ. I promise to keep you in my prayers.*

*Bill Whiting '64*

**Bill Whiting** - July 22, 2024 at 12:02 PM



“ *Full Heart was purchased for the family of Russell Murphy.*



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July 21, 2024 at 09:42 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Russell Murphy.*



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July 21, 2024 at 06:50 PM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Russell Murphy.*



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July 21, 2024 at 02:22 PM



“ *RIP Russ. You were always a gentleman..  
Frank Orfin*

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**Frank Orfin** - July 21, 2024 at 02:03 PM



“ *Rest in Peace my old friend. Glenn Byrnes*

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**Glenn Byrnes** - July 21, 2024 at 07:34 AM

NK

“ Russ was the quintessential Irishman and a long time friend. He and I first met at, of all places, Ft. Dix, New Jersey where we served together in the United States Army. We became fast friends, kindred spirits, and had some great adventures while on base. In fact, Joann just reminded me how we whacked off the top of a New Jersey pine tree for their first Christmas tree! I will always remember his quick wit and amazing talent for remembering and delivering jokes better than anyone I know! Over the years, we watched their family grow, a family that he was so proud of. It was wonderful to see Russ and Jo realize their dream come true with their home in Pentwater. I remember our first voyage on the Irish Wake with Captain Russ at the helm and the look of pure joy on his face. Russ was a true friend, and I am so fortunate that our paths crossed some 50 years ago.  
Until we meet again, Russ - cheers to you!  
Larry Kilner

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Nancy Kilner - July 20, 2024 at 05:41 PM

TG

“ Sad to hear about Russ's passing. Truly a great guy that I remember after working and knowing him for over 30 years. I think Russ's office was the only one at Henkel that was messier than mine. And the beautiful thing is he knew where everything was. My condolences go out to JoAnn and his family. He will be missed.

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terry giles - July 20, 2024 at 03:02 PM

RD

“ I have known Russ for over 40 years going back to when we hired him in the late 70's at what was then Oxy Metal Industries and became Parker+Amchem then Henkel. I have a zillion memories of Russ: fishing for Atlantic Blue fish off Long Island with Fred Poppe, Dick Morrison and others from Poppe-Tyson. Lunches at The Palm and dinner and drinks (way too many of them) at Ratazzi's on 57th Street. I could entertain a room with Murph stories, so his loss is most deeply felt. My condolences to Joann and the girls.

*Bob Dudley*

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**robert dudley** - July 20, 2024 at 01:50 PM

BH

“ I am very sad to hear of Russ passing. I enjoyed working with him at Henkel for nearly two decades and always appreciated his wonderful sense of humor. After retirement, sailing became a hobby for me because of the seed of interest that Russ shared. My sympathy goes out to Russ's family.

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**Bob Hart** - July 20, 2024 at 07:53 AM

DL

“ I was saddened to hear of Russ' passing. My sincerest sympathy to his family. I'm a retiree of Henkel who had the pleasure of interacting with Russ when I was working at Henkel. Russ was instrumental in getting me interested in sailing. He had taken a Barefoot Cruise on The Mandalay. He loved it and talked a lot about it. I sailed on the Mandalay the following year and then once again. I loved it, too. Many years ago, Russ and his good friend, Craig Williams, took the Purchasing Department sailing on Lake St. Clair. Good memories. My condolences to Russ' family.

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**Delores Lembke** - July 20, 2024 at 07:19 AM

CK

“ Cheryl Kalal lit a candle in memory of Russell Murphy



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**Cheryl Kalal** - July 19, 2024 at 09:05 PM

JD

“ Judy Dietrich lit a candle in memory of Russell Murphy



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**Judy Dietrich** - July 19, 2024 at 11:47 AM