



Edmund C. Grassa

August 10, 1918 - January 3, 2018

Edmund “Ed” Grassa, 99, of Traverse City passed away peacefully on Wednesday, January 3, 2018 at his home in the loving care of his family.

Ed lived a full life. His faith and inner strength helped him to endure his visual impairment and limited mobility in later years.

Ed was a family man who always provided for and cherished the ones he loved. He is now reunited with the love of his life, wife Marie of over 70 years, who passed away in November, 2015. Ed will be dearly missed by daughters Marcia Grassa and Merrilee Grassa of Traverse City and Nancy (David) Currie; granddaughters Jennifer Currie and Jillienne (Steph) Currie-Payant; and great grandsons Curtis and Marcus Payant of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Ed graduated at the age of 16 from Scottville High School in 1935 and attended Mason County Normal for two years. He was a rural school teacher in Ottawa County, Michigan for five years before serving in the armed forces as a radium and x-ray technician at Los Alamos, New Mexico, an Atomic Bomb Experiment Location. After four years of service, Ed finished his degree requirements at Hope College. It was in June of 1948 that Dr. Loomis, the Traverse City Superintendent, came to Hope College and encouraged his move to Traverse City, which became home for Ed and Marie.

Ed was the happiest when spending time with his family and friends and helping his community and fellow educators.

Ed served as the Oak Park Elementary Principal for 34 years. Many children, parents and educators benefited from his gentle but firm leadership. He did many great things for Oak Park and will be remembered as a gentleman with a big heart, warm smile and sense of humor.

Ed retired in 1982 and enjoyed serving his community as a volunteer with Learning Partners, Probate Court and Munson Medical Center. He was an active member of Central United Methodist Church and formed many special friendships. Ed valued and promoted public education. He held leadership positions as a proud member of MEA-R. Ed loved spending winters in Florida but was always anxious to return to his home on Grand Traverse West Bay. It is there that he enjoyed fishing. He was always willing to take family and friends out in his fishing boat. Ed was caring, loving and a good friend to have.

A man of quiet strength, when he spoke others listened.

When you think of Ed, remember to find a way to bring a smile to someone's day and show a caring heart to those you know.

The family wishes to say thank you to their wonderful in-home caregivers that assisted with Ed's care. Cremation has taken place.

In remembrance of Ed, memorials may be directed to Central United Methodist Church (music programs) 222 Cass Street, Traverse City, MI 49684 or to the Peninsula Community Library Building Fund (Ed Grassa Memorial) 2699 Island View Road, Traverse City, MI, 49686.

Kindly share your thoughts and memories with Ed's family at <http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com>. The family is being cared for by the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home.

Comments



“ To Nancy...I remember you from our dance classes when we were both so young. At times, your dad would pick you up from class. I remember him as being such a gentle man...he would stand with my father, Ed Bradford, and chat until our class was finished. I am extending our deepest sympathy on the loss of your father. My father passed three years ago...both men of life, love and faith.

Kathlene (Kathi) Bradford-Marks

Kathlene Bradford-Marks, PhD - January 27, 2018 at 11:12 AM



“ I am so happy that I was able to grow up knowing such an amazing man as my Grandfather. He was a gentle giant who was always patient, kind and had a wonderful sense of humour. I loved to spend time with him, learn from him, looked up to him, and spent many early mornings fishing and making lifelong memories. He was the epitome of a family man and an exemplary model for my sons...his Great-Grandsons (Curtis David Payant and Marcus Edmund Payant) who were fortunate to know him.
There are not many in the world that are as special as Edmund Grassa and he will be dearly missed.
I love you Gramp....

Jillienne Currie-Payant - January 25, 2018 at 01:08 PM



“ To Nancy, Marcia, and Merrra- I met each of you when you were infants living with your folks in a very little home. So many years and experience since then! Just a couple memories- your Dad, principal in the old Oak Park school, letting us work in his office to write a school newsletter. We helped pack boxes and move things to the new Oak Park where he was our teacher for ½ day that 7th grade year. Then, years later, he was still principal there as our 3 sons went there and I would use the office to produce Oak Park's newsletter, the "Knothole News". During those years we got to know your Mom more as we were all members of Central United Methodist Church. There was no one better than Marie at sitting with the children and giving the Children's Sermon. We love both Ed and Marie very much!

Muriel Peavler

Muriel Peavler - January 24, 2018 at 02:34 PM



“ Reading these wonderful tributes to our father, I am pleased to know others knew the man we loved.

Speaking for the Canadian branch of the family, he is missed dearly, but has left a genuine impression on us all. He was always a kind and thoughtful man.

Ed and my husband, David used to spend hours trying to outwit the fish of Grand Traverse Bay. Today, his great-grandsons are no exception and fishing continues to be an important way to spend quality time together, talking about important things, in a boat, on a lake somewhere.

I would like to send thanks to the caregivers who shared love, respect and humour with both Ed and Marie so that Marcia and Merra could run errands and open their own mail. You made a difference!

Most of all, I am grateful to my sisters, Marcia and Merra, who dedicated themselves to making the last years of our parents lives at home so rich and comfortable. I know how much this meant to both Ed and Marie.....and myself from afar.

Thank you, Nancy.

Nancy Currie - January 20, 2018 at 01:28 PM



“ Marcia and Merra,
Stan and I were very fortunate to be a part of Oak Park School and have the pleasure of knowing Ed. Many times over the years of teaching, Stan would come home and share the ideas and thoughts from their many discussions. Stan admired Ed very much and his leadership at Oak Park made for a very pleasurable career. He was fortunate to work for such a gentle, intelligent and kind principal. Your thoughtfulness and kindness to both your parents are a fine example of their expressions of love for others.
Judy Malaski

Judy Malaski - January 11, 2018 at 10:32 PM



“ Sorry to hear about the loss of your dad. Hugs and prayers for you both Marcia and Merra.

Bev VanBrocklin Sheffer - January 08, 2018 at 09:47 AM



“ Marcia and Merra, I am very sorry to hear about your Dad, he was a stellar figure in every way. Both he and your Mom were fortunate to have your complete devotion to caring for them these past two decades. I am sorry for your loss, but glad you had so much time as a family.

I am not positive about this, but I believe your Dad has a local record. He may well have been the longest serving administrator in Traverse City history. One time when I was talking to him I realized he had been Principal at both the new and the original Oak Park Schools.

Best regards and with great respect,
Eric Dreier

Eric Dreier - January 07, 2018 at 10:47 AM



“ Dear Merra and Marcia,
I never knew your father, but he must have been a very caring and kind man who passed those traits on to you both. How fortunate you are to have had a father who gifted you with the wisdom that it is so much more blessed to give than to receive. I am so very sorry for your loss. You are in my thoughts and prayers.
Connie Unkefer

Connie unkefer - January 06, 2018 at 10:39 PM



“ Dear Marcia and Merra,
My thoughts and prayers go out to you both and to your family with the loss of your Dad. I know how close you both were to him, and your Mom, and how much you cared for them in every way. I wish I could have met them. You both always spoke so lovingly and kindly about them both. Be well during this rough time, hugs!
MaryEllen Sanok

MaryEllen Sanok - January 14, 2018 at 11:03 AM



“ Mary Courson lit a candle in memory of Edmund C. Grassa



Mary Courson - January 06, 2018 at 06:40 PM



“ My memories of Mr. Grassa go back to the "old" Oak Park School on the southwest corner of Webster and Rose. Mr. Grassa will be remembered fondly by our family and all those lives he touched with his kindness. He walked by our home on Washington a few years ago when I was planting flowers, came in and sat for a while reminiscing over the years my brothers and I attended Oak Park. I am so sorry for your loss but grateful for the years and affect he has had on the lives of so many.

Lil (Adler) Ostendorf

Lil (Adler) Ostendorf - January 06, 2018 at 06:53 AM



“ I Went to Oak Park from 1966 to 1972. I fondly remember Mr. Grassa's smile and scense of humor. He also ran a tight ship and kept the kids on the straight and narrow. I will always remember him and my school days at Oak Park..kathy



Kathy squires - January 05, 2018 at 11:41 AM



“ I am so sorry for your loss. I worked for Mr. Grassa when I was in high school and he was principal at Oak Park School. He was such a nice person to have for my first boss. I remember his kindness and help with my first job. Again, I am sorry for your loss.

carol schaub - January 05, 2018 at 10:54 AM



“ I loved that man he was an inspiration to all who new him. I was the one in the record eagle with him im the one in front of him looking at the camera wish i could find a copy of that. He will be missed

TERRY BROSS - January 05, 2018 at 10:33 AM



“ Marcia and Merra my heart goes out to you and your family. You have been so devoted to both of your parents. Your dad's passing will leave such a gap in your lives. He was the ultimate gentleman. I don't think I ever heard him raise his voice to anyone. Whenever I hear the phrase, " the voice of reason", I think of Ed Grassa. You were so lucky to have had him for so many years. We should all be so lucky. Keeping you in my prayers. With love, Marcia L.

Marcia Leggett - January 05, 2018 at 07:35 AM



“ Mr Grassa was such a wise and kind man. I am blessed to have been one of many of Oak Park's lucky students. He was the best principal ever, and we were very fortunate to have such a wonderful role model during our formative years. God Bless his family and friends... Rest in Peace, Mr Grassa.



Stephanie Rancour - January 05, 2018 at 06:40 AM



“ Dear Merra and Marsha,
So sorry to hear of your dad's passing. Your continued devotion showed how we all should be caring for others. It was a tribute to your parents and the love you have for them. How unusual it was to run into Merra at the bank on Wednesday and talking about the care you were giving him. Who knew it was his day to go to heaven.

Debby - January 05, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ 28 files added to the album Memories



Reynolds Jonkhoff Funeral Home & Cremation Services - January 04, 2018 at 03:51 PM