



Jerald W. Murdock

June 4, 1939 - March 20, 2013

Jerald W. Murdock passed away on March 20 after a courageous battle with pulmonary fibrosis. He was born June 4, 1939 in Saginaw, Michigan to William and Myrth Murdock. He spent his childhood in Montrose, Michigan and graduated from Montrose High School in 1957 as Valedictorian. He chose Michigan State University for his undergraduate work and was a member of the Michigan State Marching Band. Jerry married Carol Johnson in 1961. They celebrated their 51st wedding anniversary this past August.

Jerry joined the mathematics department at Swartz Creek High School in Swartz Creek, Michigan in 1961. In 1967 he received his Masters Degree from Ohio State University. During his seventeen years in Swartz Creek he chaired the math department, coached junior high basketball, served as president of the Greater Flint Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and was on-site chairman of the Michigan Council of Teachers of Mathematics Conference in Flint in 1973. He was a part-time instructor of math at C.S. Mott Community College from 1975-78.

In 1978 he accepted a position in the mathematics department at Interlochen Arts Academy in Interlochen, Michigan. He was the first to introduce computers into the Interlochen classroom and continued to incorporate new technology, including graphing calculators, into the teaching of mathematics. He served as president of the Michigan Council of Teachers of Mathematics in 1992, and hosted the Michigan Council of Teachers of Mathematics Conference in 1993 in Traverse City. He was a Woodrow Wilson Foundation Functions 2 Team Teacher during the summers of 1989-1993.

In 1990 he was selected for a Presidential Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Science and Mathematics. The award included a week in Washington, D.C. as the guest of President George H.W. Bush. He also received the Michigan Presidential Award for Teaching the same year. A National Science Foundation grant in 1991 allowed Jerry and two colleagues to create the Graphing Calculator Enhanced Algebra Project. In 1998 he co-authored, *Discovering Algebra II* and in 2002, *Discovering Algebra I*. He retired from Interlochen Arts Academy in 2001. He continued his commitment to improving

mathematics in the classroom by teaching math workshops nationally for Key Curriculum Press and the Teachers Teaching Technology program from 2001-2010.

Jerry believed there were two kinds of people in the world, the ones that loved math and the ones that were going to learn to love math. He spent his forty years in the high school classroom encouraging students to share his enthusiasm for exploring, discovering and understanding the world with mathematics. At Interlochen he wove the study of mathematics into the study of art, music and nature. His classroom and home were filled with problem-solving games and puzzles; as well as reminders of his experiences around the world, and of the Northern Michigan woods and beaches that inspired his family and his creativity.

Jerry lives on in those he loved and who loved him: his wife, Carol, daughters Katherine (Rocky) Olson, Elizabeth Walsh, and son Thomas (Faith Shearin), three granddaughters, Claire Walsh, Sydney Walsh and Mavis Murdock, two sisters, Sue (Mark) Smith and Sharon (Dan) Graver, and aunt, Katherine Eastman. His family also includes father-in-law and mother-in-law Elwyn and Elaine Johnson, sister-in-law Gayle (Terry) Tekiele, nieces, nephews, cousins and a host of treasured friends and teaching colleagues. He was preceded in death by his parents, William and Myrth Murdock, sister, Sandra Richmond, uncle, Forest Eastman, nephew, Robert Cooper, and niece Sherry Watson.

Cremation has taken place, and a memorial service will be held at Central United Methodist Church in Traverse City, Michigan at 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 6, 2013 A luncheon will follow.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to Interlochen Center for the Arts Math and Science Scholarship program, Interlochen Public Radio, or Central United Methodist Church in Traverse City.

Events

APR **Memorial Service** 11:00AM

6

Central United Methodist
222 Cass Street, Traverse City, MI, US

Comments



“ Mr Murdock was one of my favorite teachers way back in 1969 at Swartz Creek

Cathy Vergison - June 30, 2013 at 08:26 PM



“ Mrs. Murdock, Kate, Libby, Tom and families:
So sorry to hear of Mr. Murdock's passing. The memory of his gentle spirit and sense of humor will stay with me. He was a great dad-away-from-home for me during my Interlochen years and I have been so moved that the relationship/concern has continued as the decades (!) have passed since graduation. Wishing you all peace. Know that so many of us keep his memory alive within us.
Karen Hosmer-Wery IAA 82

Karen Hosmer - April 06, 2013 at 07:53 AM



“ Carol and family

Something great happened to me; I knew Jerry Murdock

It has been more than twenty years from our first meeting. Time has changed many things but, not my thoughts and feelings for Jerry. Over the years i have become his brother-in-law and have developed a close relationship. Jerry was the real deal and a nice guy. Our relationship had no need for math problems, solutions, symbols, equations, or pop quizzes. We enjoyed each other and Jerry even laughed at my jokes, puns and life stories. He liked our conversations and i will always remember him as generous, gentle, genuine and a genius. Jerry was happy with his life and he knew it. He was twice blessed. He enjoyed his collection of vintage photos and took every opportunity to show them to the family. Jerry was the Murdock historian and talked lovingly about the FARM and the reunions he attended. Jerry often became emotional with any mention of his dad, mom or sister Sandra. He missed them very much.

Jerry had not-so-secret guilty pleasures: NPR, CAR TALK with Click and clack, lame jokes, puzzlers, Guen Frostic prints of nature's wonder and Garrison Keillor's " A Prairie Home Companion live from Lake Wobegon. Many a time I caught him plugged in to the I POD listening to those stories or his wonderful music collection. Jerry's favorite pleasure was talking and listening to friends and family. He called it "GOOD STUFF". Jerry enjoyed his Green and White MSU Spartan sport teams and was proud of them no matter what.

Jerry is my example of humbleness, tenderness, kindness and sweetness. He accepted his earthly end and heavenly beginning with grace and maturity. The song: "Impossible" best describes Jerry. "Unsinkable ships sink, unbendable steel bends, unbreakable walls break but Jerry's spirit, inspiration and light will only become stronger in the hearts of all, who, have been blessed to have known him. For me; Jerry will never be gone. He is part of me and his love, influence and legacy will live on in the lives of his students, friends and family. You will be missed but never forgotten.

Jerry would agree with Mr. Einstein when he said: "I must be willing to give up what i am in order to become what I will be". There is great love in that statement.

Yes!

Something great happened to me; I knew Jerry Murdock.

DANIEL GRAVER - April 05, 2013 at 09:06 PM



“ What a beautiful tribute my dad, Dan Graver, wrote about his dear friend and brother (in-law). We are all better people for knowing Jerry! I'm glad to have shared a love of mathematics with him. I was even lucky enough to attend one of his workshops involving graphing calculators at the NCTM conference Philadelphia, PA (2004). He has given me plenty advice and encouragement as a math teacher. He simply thrived on helping others

to see just how exciting math can be. What a special man; a force to be reckoned with! He will be greatly missed, but never forgotten! Thank you and rest in peace now, Jerry:)

Love, Jessi Graver Rutkowski

Jessi - April 07, 2013 at 02:21 PM



“ m

dan - April 05, 2013 at 07:30 PM



“ Dear Carol, Tom, and the Murdock family,

I've been thinking a lot about Jerry these past few weeks and about the wonderful times we had personally and professionally as a result of our long collaboration. I know that you will be celebrating his life this weekend and I wanted both of you to know that I, too, along with hundreds of friends and colleagues from the Key Curriculum community, will be thinking wonderful thoughts--tomorrow and forever--about Jerry and our association with your family. It was an honor to work with Jerry. As well you know, becoming a Key author meant becoming part of the Key family. Jerry was an anchor in our family as I know he was in yours. For all of us, he was the archetype of the perfect author. Caring, thoughtful, smart, unassuming, articulate— Jerry blended humility and brilliance perfectly and gracefully. Like you, we will miss him always and carry his memory in our hearts.

With fond thoughts of the Murdock family,
Steve

Steven Rasmussen - April 05, 2013 at 02:15 PM



“ While it has been a number of years since we have last seen each other, the Murdock family holds a special place in my heart and childhood memory. I think fondly of visits to Interlochen--a wonderful and inspiring place in and of itself--and the friendship shared between our families. In reading Mr. Murdock's accomplishments, it is difficult to fathom the number of lives he has touched with his passion for mathematics and the intersection of math within the everyday facets of life. May the blessing of God's presence be with you as you grieve Mr. Murdock's passing from this life to the next and celebrate with joy a life well-lived.

Take care,
Matt Packer

Matthew Packer - March 26, 2013 at 12:53 PM



“ I have fond memories of Jerry. As a young teacher I met him at various math meetings in the Traverse area. He shared much of his knowledge of using technology in the classroom with me and I used proto types of his textbooks in my classroom. He quickly became someone I admired and looked up to both as a professional colleague and a compassionate and caring person. Condolences to Carol and the family.

Mearl Sawin - March 25, 2013 at 04:04 PM



“ Jerry was a special friend from high school, we spent 4 years as friends, in the band, and in the sports venue. He as a player and me as a cheerleader. Six of us grouped together as special friends. After 50 years, we again found each other, although there were only 5, Pete had died in the 1980's. It was so special to me to again be a close friend with Jerry and Carol and to learn what an outstanding person he had become.

He chose the perfect wife and their relationship was one of understanding and support. No one could have been better than Carol. We did not have long to enjoy this special friendship, but I treasure the years we had.

To Carol I send my love, I know how hard it will be for you without Jerry as I have shared your grief. May God bless you and embrace you in his care during this difficult time.

My love to you and your family.

Joan Gray Nugent

Joan Nugent - March 24, 2013 at 07:39 PM



“ My condolences to all in the family, especially dear Kate. Jerry was a very special teacher at a very special school in a very special time. His like will seldom be seen again. Karla Herbold (Moore Maddy)

Karla Herbold - March 24, 2013 at 03:17 PM



“ Mr. Murdock was an inspiring and incredible educator to even those who were absolutely terrible math students. When I was a sophomore, I struggled immensely with algebra and got frustrated easily. Mr. Murdock was the type of teacher to approach the problem holistically - he asked me questions about my schedule, my thought process, my interests, my music, my daily habits - knowing full well how much the whole picture matters when determining why a student is struggling. He held me after class one day and said "Megan! I think your focus in class is not just about math, but about lunch. You have this class four hours after you've last eaten! You need to have a snack so you can concentrate." He was right. Snacks helped. I remained a less than impressive math student, but I knew my best effort was always matched and surpassed by his own. It meant so much coming from a teacher in a subject to which I was not particularly connected. I'm a teacher now too (history, not math) and his attentiveness and genuine concern are qualities that I've kept in mind in my own classroom for years now. Thanks for setting such a great example, Mr. Murdock.

Megan Summers IAA '99-'02

Megan Summers - March 23, 2013 at 05:07 PM



“ Dear Carol and family,

So sorry to read about Jerry's death. Do you remember the first year you were in Interlochen we visited you? That was a long time ago. The heartache you are now feeling is difficult to heal but the love leaves lots of sweet memories that is impossible to steal. Jerry certainly accomplished a lot during his time here on earth. What an inspirations he was to his many students over the years. I will be thinking about you and saying prayers.

Love,
Ros Hamady

Ros Hamady - March 23, 2013 at 03:14 PM



“ What a great Math teacher he was and he was such a help with any problem of Math or Life. Hold to all your precious memories. Our thoughts and prayers are with all the Family at this time.

Ronda Boillat-Bickell - March 23, 2013 at 02:45 PM



“ I am so sorry to hear of Jerry's passing. I hope you received my email and card. You will always be the best neighbors I ever had. I am in Dallas spending time with Sharon and her family until mid-May, so I will miss his memorial service. His smile says it all. I know how much he will be missed. Hold on to each memory as it will become a treasure. Fondly, Lois Kowalsky

Lois Kowalsky - March 22, 2013 at 08:54 PM



“ Carol and family, as Bill's family his passing is profound for you and it can never be anything less, but it is also a tragedy for the body of scholars in which he was such a leader. In the spring of '57 I was in the seventh grade at Montrose High School and vividly remember Bill and his pictures in the year book, not only in sports but in music in a unique quartet fostered by Al Gwillim, the music teacher who subsequently became Principal. It was the first time that I realized high school kids could make great music together. It is so fitting that he joined the faculty at Interlochen and saw a connection between math and music. Bill was an inspiration to me and had a marvelous career which benefited so many people. My parents were good friends of his parents, William and Myrth, and they were just as proud of him as were his own parents. We are with you and your family and know Bill is at peace and with the Lord.

Joseph S. Stewart II, CDR, USN (Ret.)
MHS '62

Joe Stewart, MHS '62 - March 22, 2013 at 08:22 PM



“ Mr. Murdock was my math teacher at the Interlochen Arts Academy. His passion for math was contagious. He instilled in me a great love for the subject, which I pursued for a while in college, while majoring in Music. I will always remember his warmth, dedication, commitment, enthusiasm, and support. I send my deepest sympathies to his entire family.

Marica Tacconi, IAA '88

Marica Tacconi - March 22, 2013 at 07:29 PM



“ Although words cannot express my sadness at the loss of such a good human being, I celebrate the essence of his life that has influenced many and can never be lost. Jerry, you are missed. Carol, my heart goes out to you. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. I 'd like to think that Jerry and Pete are having another game of hoops right now. Jerry was a super friend.

Ruth Harrow - March 22, 2013 at 07:29 PM



“ To uncle Jerry and Aunt Carol. You have always inspired me with your love for each other and your kindness to the world. I do not know two people that loved each other more than you to did. Although I was not around all the time, I could tell just by watching you. Uncle Jerry, I will miss and love you always. Please say hi to my sisiter, grandmother, cousin, and aunt. I miss them so much. And to you Aunt Carol, I think of you every day and I am so sorry for your loss. You are such a strong women.

With Love Always and Forever,
Dana

Dana Boggs - March 22, 2013 at 05:45 PM



“ To this day, I have fond memories of Mr. Murdock...as a teacher and a friend. He looked beyond the relationship of teacher/student and truly had an influence on my life beyond those horrid calculus exams. My sympathies to the Murdock family. I'm sure he is resting in peace.

Jonathan Golodner - March 22, 2013 at 04:27 PM



“ Dearest Murdock Family:

When I entered Jerry's classroom at age 16, I arrived with math dread, and numbers gave me eczema. Jerald Murdock's classroom was the first and only time when numeracy felt within reach, and curiosity replaced anxiety. A glimmer of competence appeared where humiliation had stood. How could I forget that precious and radical transformation of my relationship to math? I told Jerry these things in person when I returned to campus as an adult. But I'm not sure he knew the magnitude of impact on me. Today, I read that "Numeracy has an influence on career professions, literacy, and risk perception towards health decisions." In short, it impacts our ability to be fully present in this world, and this life. Your father and husband made a difference here. His gentleness, decency, and compassion made him an ally even to those of us who did not bring math talent to our desks, so that we too might experience what made him love his field. Thank you for sharing your father and husband with generations of students.

Melanie Drane - March 22, 2013 at 12:54 PM



“ So sorry to hear of Mr. Murdock's passing. It was great to see him at the reunion last May. He's an important part of my Interlochen memories. To all his family, we are grieving with you.

Scott Burgess IAA '82 - March 22, 2013 at 11:14 AM



“ (Intended to sign this Scott Burgess IAA '82, but it didn't work)

Scott Burgess - March 22, 2013 at 11:15 AM



“ Carol, Katie and Tom - so sorry to hear of Jerry's death. I have wonderful memories of all of you during my years at Interlochen. Jerry was a wonderful colleague and a great friend. I have never forgotten the support you both gave me during the tough times. If anyone could have made me love math it was Jerry. Always with a twinkle in his eyes he was a great positive role model for students and staff alike. I appreciated his steadiness and calm approach to any problems, always coupled with humor and integrity. My thoughts and prayers are with you all.

Linda Howard - March 22, 2013 at 10:58 AM



“ Jerry was my big brother and my hero. He always watched out for me and had my back. I will miss the way we used to text each other during MSU basketball and football games, Go Green--Go White.

Your baby sister,
Sharon

Sharon Graver - March 21, 2013 at 06:25 PM



“ Jerry and I went Sundayschool and Church together as little boys. We were in the same grade 7 thru 12 at Montrose High School. We were good friends.We share many things together.

David Keys - March 21, 2013 at 06:45 PM



“ I remember when I was a child and 2 years older than Jerry, it seemed that he was older because he was so much bigger than I was. My sister, brother, and myself always liked going to Uncle Bill's and Aunt Myrth's when they lived on the farm. Jerry had one trick that he liked to play on me (only once though). While all 5 of us cousins would be wondering around the grounds, Jerry would say "let's line up and hold hands, I will put my hand on this electric fence first". Well I just happened to be the last one on the chain of cousins. When he grabbed it, the electricity went though all of us and I really got "zapped". WHEW!

Jerry seemed to always handle challenges and new endeavors, realizing that it was "with the help of God". God works in many ways, thus he created Carol. Enough said!!!!

Love always, Lary Schlaack and Jean Murdock Shepherd Schlaack

Jean Schlaack - March 21, 2013 at 08:27 PM



“ Uncle Jerry ,
A well educated man who has inspired thousands and educated millions.He has a wonderful family that will always remember him. I am honored that we share the same blood. I know he will watch over all of us.
Until we meet again, thank you for being a great man.

Your nephew
Steve W Vette

Steve W Vette - March 22, 2013 at 12:10 AM



“ "Mr. Murdock" was my favorite teacher at Swartz Creek High. He was an excellent teacher who made math fun. His ability to get his students engaged was a real gift. He made a huge difference in my life. Thank You Mr. Murdock!

Steve Herrell - SCHS Class of 1976

Steve Herrell - March 22, 2013 at 10:09 AM



“ I fondly remember Mr. Murdock in math class at Swartz Creek in the early seventies.Great teacher who made class interesting and fun. I'm very sorry to hear of your loss but very grareful for knowing such a fine man and teacher

John Pobocik Swartz Creek Class of 1973

