



Lawrence Ivan Mack

JAN 28, 1936 - NOV 25, 2023



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Lawrence Mack, a former Jackson High School teacher whose newspaper and yearbook staffs won state and national awards, died Saturday, Nov. 25, of heart failure. He was 87.

He is one of the few high school teachers in the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame. A longtime Jackson resident, Larry had many talents and passions. He was the kind of teacher who changed lives, and he also could remodel a kitchen, lead a church choir, create hilarious handmade birthday cards, build a ship model, and wrangle his family of seven on a three-week road trip.

He was a devoted husband and father of five daughters. "I could not imagine a better husband/father than Larry," a family friend said. Larry was hugely proud of his 15 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren and never missed an opportunity to brag about his family.

He was an active parishioner at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church and a proud fourth-degree Knights of Columbus member, the highest rank. The church building has numerous examples of Larry's handiwork, including the giant crucifix in the narthex and the Stations of the Cross in the sanctuary that he personally restored. He was an avid model railroader who took over the family basement with his elaborate, intricately handcrafted model railroad diorama. He loved travel and was known for hauling his wife and daughters to sites of natural disasters, tragedies, and historical battlefields.

Larry approached life with gusto. He loved sharing stories, telling jokes, and had plenty of opinions he was only too willing to share. He had a big personality.

Larry was born on Jan. 28, 1936, to Wilbur and Doris Mack, the third of four siblings, and grew up in Ann Arbor and Jackson. He was graduated from St. John's High School in 1954; from Jackson Junior College in 1956, where he was named outstanding sophomore; earned his bachelor's degree from Western Michigan



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College and took graduate classes at Michigan State University.

In 1958, two months after graduating from Western, he married RoseMary Layher. It was a true partnership of 65 years. “He was so good to me,” Rosie said this week. Larry began his 36-year teaching career in 1958 at Charlotte High School. When Larry and Rosie moved back to Jackson in 1961, he worked for a few years at East Jackson High School. When that principal left for Jackson Public Schools, he recruited Larry to come along, first at East Intermediate School and then Jackson High.

At JHS during the 1970s and 1980s, Larry became renowned in the world of high school journalism. In 1977, the Michigan Interscholastic Press Association honored Larry with the Golden Pen Award, the highest recognition for an adviser. He was given MIPA’s John V. Field Award in 1995 for his contributions to state scholastic journalism.

In 1983, Larry was honored by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association as one of the top journalism advisors in the country, and he received the national Journalism Education Association’s Lifetime Achievement Award in 1995. He was inducted into the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame in 2003.

“For the most part, Larry Mack turned us loose with notebooks and pencils, cameras, and film. He let us decide what stories we would write, which ones would run on the front page and what the headlines would say,” recalled one his former students, in a nomination letter for the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame. “His role was to teach the lessons that mattered most: Get it right. Make it fair. Make it interesting. Make it matter.”

He retired in 1994 at age 58 because of cardiac issues. He braced for an early death, but to his happy surprise, he lived another 29 years.

Larry was preceded in death by his parents and siblings; a son, Kevin Patrick, who died soon after birth, and a granddaughter, Dr. Chelsea Cunliffe Boet.

He is survived by his wife; five daughters and their spouses, Julie Mack and Harold Beu of Kalamazoo, Marcia and Ron Cunliffe of Kalamazoo, Colleen and Jack Henning of Kalamazoo, Maureen and Mark Reasoner of Canton Township, and Andrea and Paul Spencer of Jackson.



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He also is survived by 14 grandchildren: Shane Cunliffe; Cara Cunliffe Herman; Cailey Cunliffe Krueger; Kevin and Kathryn Dugal; Sarah Beu; Jordan, Spencer, and Jackson Henning; Sarah, Erin and Grace Reasoner, and Christopher and Elizabeth Spencer, and seven great-grandchildren.

A visitation will be held Friday, Dec. 1, from 4:00PM- 6:30PM at Our Lady of Fatima Church in Michigan Center, and there will be a gathering at 10:00AM, followed by a memorial Mass being celebrated at 11:00AM Saturday, Dec. 2, at Fatima.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to St. Louis Center, 16195 W. Old U.S. Highway 12, Chelsea, MI 48188.



Events

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Family and Friends Gathering

Friday, December 1, 2023

4:00 PM - 6:30 PM ET

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church
913 Napoleon Road, Michigan Center MI 49254

Family and Friends Gathering

Saturday, December 2, 2023

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM ET

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church
913 Napoleon Road, Michigan Center MI 49254

Memorial Mass

Saturday, December 2, 2023

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM ET

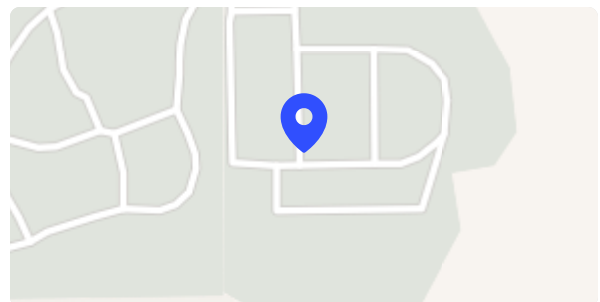
Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church
913 Napoleon Road, Michigan Center MI 49254

Burial of Ashes

Saturday, December 2, 2023

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM ET

St. John's Catholic Cemetary
403 E. South St., Jackson MI 49203





Tribute Wall

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Anonymous sent a Sweet Tranquility Basket to the Mack family.



November 29 at 9:52 AM



William . planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Lawrence.



November 29 at 9:52 AM



Carol A Stygles posted:

I will greatly miss my buddy, Larry. We collaborated on many projects for the new church and I came to rely on his expertise. We became good friends and had each other's backs when it came to singing and reading for daily masses. I miss his great booming voice. He was certainly one of a kind. Rest in peace my friend. Carol

November 28 at 10:11 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Lawrence by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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