



## Fred Anthony Ciampa

March 6, 1936 - December 31, 2025

Fred A. Ciampa

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Fred A. Ciampa—affectionately known as Fred, Sonny, or simply Papa—passed away peacefully on December 31, 2025, in Northville, Michigan, at the age of 89. Fred was born in Dearborn on March 6, 1936, to Anthony (Tony) and Zelinda (Zada) Ciampa, and from an early age embodied the values of dedication, curiosity, and joyful mischief that would define his remarkable life. Fred’s early years were at his family’s garage, where he first learned to work with his hands as an auto mechanic under his father’s guidance at Tony’s Garage. A graduate of Fordson High School (Class of 1954), Fred continued to pursue his passion for engineering, earning a BS in Mechanical Engineering from Lawrence Technological University in 1964. Never one to rest, he went on to earn an MBA from Michigan State University in 1980—all while raising a family and building a distinguished career.

He began his professional journey at Vickers in the Engineering Division and later joined Ford Motor Company, specializing in Powertrain engineering and rising to the role of Assistant Plant Manager at the Livonia Plant. Among his many career highlights, Fred was awarded a patent for a “Compact positive displacement pump” (in collaboration with Sergio Mazzola), and was selected to travel to China to lead a major contract negotiation on behalf of Ford.

Fred married Marilyn, on May 26, 1956, in Southfield, Michigan. Together, they built a family and a legacy, living for over 40 years in a historic home that

Fred lovingly restored—sometimes with creative solutions that didn't always make it back up the basement stairs.

A man of infectious energy and generosity, Fred was a proud member and leader in numerous organizations, including serving as President of the Pigeon Club and overseeing the Poultry Barn at the Michigan State Fair. He was also a dedicated member of the Democratic Club, Ducks Unlimited, the Classic Car Club, and the Novi Economic Development Corporation, and was a lifelong supporter of education and philanthropy. His contributions to several universities, particularly Lawrence Tech—whose Fabrication Lab now bears his name—speak to his enduring belief in hard work and innovation. He also made a significant gift to Angels' Place to support educational enrichment for developmentally disabled adults.

Fred was baptized and confirmed in the Catholic Church.

He relished the role of “Papa” to his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, delighting in worldwide family vacations, surprise dinners out and cooking his famous ‘Egg McMuffins’ for his grandkids. He had a flair for mischief and wit, known for sayings like, “Kid’s vacation!”, “Who wants more ice cream?!”, and “Guess what I paid for this Christmas tree?!” ...were not talking about a sale. He enjoyed raising chickens and pigeons, fishing, hunting, collecting stamps, working crossword puzzles, restoring antique boat motors, and watching old Westerns—and, memorably, Jerry Springer with his beloved mother.

Fred is survived by his devoted wife of nearly 70 years, Marilyn; his children Linda Ciampa Holody (Jim), Fred A. Ciampa, Jr. (Kim), and Penni L. Muldoon; grandchildren Eddie “Ed the Head” Ciampa Davis, Lauren “Lournie” Ciampa Davis, Dr. James “Doonie” Ross Muldoon, and Tristan “Guggenheimer” Oliver Muldoon Kelley; and great-grandchildren Morgen Meehan, Chloe, Cullen, and Noel Muldoon. He also leaves behind his cherished sisters JoAnn Ciampa and June Ciampa Lauer; spouses of grandchildren Kate Anderson Davis, Lon C. Meehan, and Christy L. Muldoon; nephew Lane Lauer; and many loving cousins from the Ciampa, Battistella, and Schellini families.

Fred’s life was filled with passion, purpose, and a generous helping of humor.

He leaves behind not only a legacy of achievement, but a trail of memories full of laughter, love, and “hot, hot, hot” dinner plans.

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# Tribute Wall

KZ

“ Fred was my campaign manager when I ran for office in 2010. One of his ideas was to hire a plane to pull a banner with my name on it. I was skeptical but the week prior to the election we still had \$1000 left in my campaign account and so I relented and for three hours on election day the banner was seen overhead. The prospect of my being elected was slim to none, as my opponent was a well known and respected former state rep and city council member in Novi. She later told me that she thought she was done when she saw the banner. We didn't win but we had a lot of fun trying and met many wonderful people in Novi.

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**Karen Zyczynski** - February 22 at 08:42 AM

SC

“ My brother Sonny had a habit of treating my bedroom door like a dry-cleaning drop-off. Day after day, I'd find his clothes hanging there with a note demanding they be ironed by evening. Eventually, I grew tired of being his unpaid maid. One day, I finally snapped and left the pile untouched.

When Sonny realized his clothes weren't ready, he was livid. He chased me down the stairs, swinging the wrinkled laundry at me like a weapon. In a moment of desperate defense, I grabbed some water, doused him with it, and bolted into the bathroom. I stayed locked in there for hours until Mom finally came home to broker a peace treaty. He didn't stop using his "maid" after that, but he did start adding a "please" to his notes.

That was just the tip of the iceberg; Sonny teased me relentlessly. But there was a flip side to his pestering. If any kid at school even thought about bugging me, Sonny was right there watching over me. He was the reason I learned how to hold my own.

The teachers were always shocked at how well I took care of myself in a scrap. They had no idea that Sonny had been "preparing" me for battle my entire life. Whether I had to bite, scratch, or pinch, I knew how to end a fight quickly. Thanks to my brother, nobody at school messed with me twice.



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Sister JoAnn Ciampa - January 06 at 08:07 PM

MC

“ Our deepest condolences to the Ciampa family. We spent many wonderful visits with Fred and his family, the most memorable for me was when he hosted me on a trip to Beijing, it was a great adventure and a wonderful time. A person as remarkable as Fred will be deeply missed by all. I pray that God will watch over and comfort each and every family member and loved one. You have our deepest sympathy, and our enduring friendship during this most difficult time. Margaret and Russ Cobane

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**margaret cobane** - January 03 at 12:53 PM

JL

“ Fred, my big brother, was always "Sonny" to me. We adored each other as kids. Occasionally he borrowed \$2 from me because I saved my monthly \$1 allowance, but of course he was 8 years older with lots of HS needs. I would never say no to him.



One time while driving home with Mom and Dad, he said he would give me a dollar if I would stop my incessant questions and chattering. He challenged me to just say "chicken" all the way home for the hour drive. I did and he had to pay up. He admitted "chicken for an hour" was far worse than my nonstop chatter.

He used to occasionally go to my twirling competitions and was so nervous watching me compete. Finally, he told Mom and Dad "Why do you put her through this?" They looked at him and then me, and said, Sonny you are the only nervous wreck. Cookie, (my nickname), looks just fine. I said yep, I am. He paid for my first ballroom dance lesson so I wouldn't be a 'wallflower' at school dances. Haha.

He was always trying to protect his little sister, and I loved him dearly for it.

I also loved his choice of Marilyn as his life partner. I was so proud of all his successes and hard work. Getting his BS and MS while working full time.

On his deathbed last week, I reminded him of some of our many life stories. He remembered. I remembered that I loved him through the good times and the tough. We laughed and cried together. RIP my dear Sonny.

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June Ciampa Lauer - January 03 at 12:45 PM

JC

“ Fred was my God father. Although he is 6 years older than me, we spent a lot of time together because our mothers were sisters and our fathers were brothers. Sony introduced me to tropical fish, which I enjoyed for many years. He also showed me how to jump a low hurdle in track. A skill I never developed. The thing I most remember about Fred is the many useless things we use to argue about. One of them being the use of screws versus nails in construction. One of the funniest things that I ever saw in my life was Fred playing an accordion, because he had the rhythm of a rock. Also, while intoxicated, the dance he performed at his parents 50th anniversary, makes me laugh to this day. Although we both retired from Ford, Fred reached a much higher level than me because of his great determination and skill.

*He will be missed.*

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**Jerry Ciampa** - January 02 at 02:51 PM

FS

“ I will always remember picnics and swimming in the pool as a kid. I always got excited when my mom told us we were going to Sonny's house for something or another. Probably a polenta party. More recently, I will always be grateful to Sonny for helping me in my one and only run for political office by hosting a fundraiser at his and Marilyn's beautiful home.

*He will be missed.*

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**Fred Starzyk** - January 02 at 01:53 PM

CP

“ *Worked with Fred when I was a Ford Engineer, during the 80's. Our job was to find applications for robotics at the Van Dyke Plant. Fred was a down to earth, practical kind of guy. I enjoyed working with Fred. I also became friends with his daughter Linda and have kept in touch via Facebook. Prayers for the family.*

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**Chuck Proctor** - January 02 at 01:19 PM