



## Grant Johnston Eldridge

February 20, 1959 - July 14, 2025

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Grant Eldridge, 66, passed away on Monday, July 14, 2025, demonstrating incredible strength while facing cancer. A native of Kalamazoo, Grant was a devoted son, husband, stepfather, grandfather, and friend whose life was rich with curiosity, compassion, and quiet humor.

The only child of Barbara and the late Larry “Sherm” Eldridge, Grant cared tenderly for his father in his final years. He is survived by his beloved wife, Jessica Bell; his mother, Barbara Eldridge; his stepdaughter Angela, her husband David, and grandsons Owen and Aidan. He is lovingly remembered by his two aunts, Sharon and Harriet, cousins, nieces, nephews, and a large circle of close friends.

Grant graduated from Kalamazoo College and pursued post-graduate studies at the University of Michigan and Canterbury College. A lifelong student of history—especially military history and battles—Grant was a voracious reader who found endless joy in books, approaching learning with deep curiosity, discipline, and enthusiasm. Grant spent much of his professional life as an editor with the Gale Group and authored a book on another lifelong passion—baseball. A man of many interests, Grant approached each with good-natured competition and quiet dedication. As a member of the Detroit Tennis Club, he brought the same thoughtful mastery to tennis that he applied to golf, bridge, and managing his beloved fantasy baseball team, the Baby Harp Seals. An

ardent fisherman, Grant found his truest peace in the waters of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, where his favorite spots remain his secret.

A dedicated cat lover, Grant always found comfort in feline company, especially in his cat Halali. He had a sharp wit, a deep love of history—particularly military history—and an enduring fascination with strategic re-enactments of historical battles. He also loved to cook, happily experimenting with new recipes and finding joy in the kitchen, where he delighted in sharing his creations with friends and family. Though he detested yardwork, he did it lovingly for Jessica.

Grant was a proud anglophile and a patron of the arts, especially the Detroit Opera and public broadcasting. Despite a dislike of flying, he became a keen travel companion, sharing in Jessica's love of exploration and visiting family across the world.

Diagnosed with multiple myeloma in 2019, Grant lived five more vibrant years before facing a secondary cancer with grace and resolve.

He will be deeply missed by all who were lucky to share in his warmth, wisdom, and humor.

A celebration of Grant's life will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Detroit Public Television 48325 Alpha Drive Ste. 150, Wixom, MI 48393, NPR PO Box 791490, Baltimore, MD 21279-1490, the Detroit Opera 1526 Broadway Street, Detroit, MI 48226 or Alliance for the Great Lakes 150 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601. Arrangements entrusted with Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home, Westland. To share a memory, please use the Share a Memory tab on this web page.

# Tribute Wall

“ Unfortunately, Grant and I had lost touch about 20 years ago, but I still have wonderful memories of Grant. I met Grant the day I arrived at Kalamazoo College in 1980 as I was moving into our suite. One of the first things I did was set up my stereo system and I promptly put on a Beatles album. I knew no one and was kind of intimidated by my surroundings, and suddenly Grant appeared in the doorway to my room, and he just blurted out "The Beatles", as he cracked a big welcoming smile. We instantly connected over the Beatles, and this was the beginning of our friendship. For the next few years, Grant was my best friend, and I hope I was his.

During those years, Grant and I listened to endless Beatles songs, and played numerous games of chess and backgammon. He also introduced me to playing war games, and taught me how to play cribbage and euchre as well. We were great euchre partners who could often read each other's thoughts, and both of us, always willing to go it alone. Grant and I were both history majors and this was another thing that helped us bond. Surprisingly it was Grant's love of baseball that helped me develop my Master's thesis. I was just beginning to work on my Master's thesis, and Grant was reading the book "Streak" about Joe DiMaggio hitting streak in 1941 when he discovered a single paragraph about the Truman Committee's investigation and scrutiny of Standard Oil and its' relationship with the German multinational corporation I.G. Farben. His discovery of this single paragraph, and his sharing it with me opened up new and fruitful avenues of research. I heartily agree with what so many have already stated in their remembrances; Grant had a brilliant mind, combined with a cutting wit and a towering intellect. Indeed, he was a true Renaissance man who was curious about everything.

I was deeply saddened by the news of Grant's passing especially at such a relatively young age. Unfortunately, Grant's life was cut too short by an insidious illness; he deserved to enjoy his retirement, golfing, fishing, etc. To be honest, since we had lost touch years

*ago I hadn't thought about Grant for some time, until 2 nights ago, when out of the blue I decided to Google Grant's name and was completely shocked to discover that Grant had passed. In hindsight, I think that Grant's spirit touched me on the shoulder that night and told me to Google him. I had the distinct honor and rare pleasure of knowing and being a friend of Grant. I will miss him greatly and his infectious laugh.*

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**Neil Marinovich** - August 20, 2025 at 08:26 PM

MW

*“ I had the pleasure of being a teammate of Grant's at Gale. Every time he pulled up a chair at my desk, I never knew what the topic of conversation would be and I was always entertained and educated.*

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**Mike Weaver** - August 11, 2025 at 11:14 AM

VE

“ I met Grant on my first day at Gale in 2000. We were in orientation for new hires. With so much in common—love of sports, fishing, the Beatles, and both kids at heart—we became friends right away.

Grant was a very giving and compassionate person. Having previously worked at Gale, he showed me around the place and introduced me to the people he knew. And he told me colorful stories of his prior time there, especially the old days at the Penobscot Building downtown.

Being a great golfer, Grant took me under his wing and mentored me in the game, helping me become a better player.

He was always quick to compliment people. The one part of golf that I was pretty good at—putting—he told me he couldn't help me with. If somebody was good at something, he would say so. This kind of sincerity is refreshing.

Enthusiasm describes Grant to a tee. He embodied it wherever he went. The colorful stories he told will remain with me forever.

The one about the lady who brings a feral cat to the veterinarian. Told so vividly, you could picture the cat running circles on the walls. The one where he catches a praying mantis as a kid and keeps it as an outdoor pet for a while. The one about the baseball player, Walter “Boom-Boom” Beck, who got his nickname because the pitches he threw so often made that sound as they ricocheted off the outfield walls

Grant was one of the smartest people I've ever known. He was knowledgeable, articulate, and he always had an open and inquiring mind.

And his sense of humor. This may be the thing I'll miss the most. Talk about an infectious laugh. His laugh alone would make me laugh.

*I'll miss you my dear friend, Grant. Rest in peace.*

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**Verne** - August 08, 2025 at 06:20 PM



“*Jessi has been one of my dearest friends since 1987, and when Grant came into her life, I saw her come alive with love and adventure! Grant was a good friend and travel companion to me, bringing humor, engaging conversation, and neverending curiosity as we explored the Caribbean together! He was always up for snorkeling, hiking, fetching pastries from the bakery, and of course, fishing. All my love to Jesse, Barbara, and his whole family. We will miss him dearly. Cheri Gregory and Ken Holbert*

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**Cheri Gregory** - August 04, 2025 at 08:11 PM

LA

“*Grant was a long-time co-worker and friend. Very sorry to hear about his passing. I had the pleasure of going to see operas with Grant and Jessica and I will always remember how wonderful that was. He was a very knowledgeable man, especially about history and fishing!*

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**Laurie** - August 04, 2025 at 12:31 PM

KH

“ I met Grant at work over two decades ago. We were both early arrivers, getting to the office when the hallways were quiet and empty. I would walk in, tired and stressed from the long drive, and I could count on Grant to appear at my desk before I even had a chance to sit down and turn on my computer. He'd have a story queued up, practically vibrating with excitement to let it out. He was never without a story—the BEST stories—to tell, even at 7 a.m.! And his laugh...I will never forget his laugh. It wasn't always a loud laugh, but the joy and humor would take over his entire face. Throughout the years, I have enjoyed get togethers with Grant, Jessi, and the Gale Group crew, including trips to Northville Downs horse races and many dinners. When I last saw him, we reminisced about the day he rescued an injured bird and brought it to work in a box. That was Grant—kind and gentle. He was also the most unbelievably knowledgeable person I have ever known. I am grateful for our friendship and I will miss him so much.

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**Kristy Harper** - August 02, 2025 at 07:39 PM

KK

Kristy, I could not have said it any better. I too I had the pleasure of knowing Grant thru working with him at Gale. He was a true Renaissance Man, but with an acerbic wit. For me, he also was somewhat of a mentor, a wisecracking sage that I would often go to for advice, whether for work, relationship, or general life issues. Equal parts philosopher, storyteller, and smartass, he had an uncanny ability to cut to the heart of things. It was an honor to have known him. The world has lost a rare and remarkable spirit.

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**Ken Karges** - August 07, 2025 at 07:38 PM

AM

“ I am so grateful I got to know Grant, and call him my friend. We met through work but knowing Grant was more like play. Fishing outings, card games, pay per view boxing matches with Jeff Lehman and others from the Gale crowd, breakfasts down at the Eastern Market, I was lucky to do all of these things with Grant. Our tastes in films overlapped in some notable cases, and the smiles I got having whole conversations with him comprised of dialogue from Lawrence of Arabia were many. I owe my love of The Big Lebowski to Grant!

When my parents passed away, Grant was a comfort. Another way he always let me know he cared about me: we never did anything together without him asking, "How are Jane and the boys?"

I love Grant Johnston Eldridge! I will miss him very much. Deepest condolences to Jessi, his mother, and everyone who loved him, too.

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**Andy Malonis** - August 02, 2025 at 12:37 PM

LD

“ We were so privileged to see Grant often multiple times a week, as he loved cheese and wine! It was always the highlight of our day to hear about his tennis matches and his wonderful energy for life. Our shop hasn't been the same without our friend.

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**Lindsay - Dolcetto** - August 01, 2025 at 03:26 PM

AH

“ At the age of six years Grant took the train from Kalamazoo to Birmingham Michigan to spend time with his cousins Barbara and John ... you would think He was a world traveler

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**auntie Hattie** - July 30, 2025 at 10:40 PM

JL

“ I was fortunate to be part of the magical childhood summers we had together carousing around Leelanau county, but mostly Glen Lake. The best part was the love our Grandparents had shown us. May they always be at the bottom of the Benzie Trail waiting for us.  
Your cousin

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**John Lewis** - July 25, 2025 at 08:51 AM